

Harry Potter: inside story on the first games



Video Game

Review

FREE

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STRATEGY GUIDE

**E3 SPECIAL
EDITION**

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Eidos's Legacy of Kain:
Soul Reaver 2



The more things change...

First Electronic Arts raised eyebrows by announcing they would make games, including their hallowed sports titles, for Nintendo's GameCube - in addition to the PS2 and Xbox.

Then Sega surprised us when they disclosed plans to abandon making hardware and become platform agnostic by making games for all three consoles.

So what does all this mean for us gamers? As the console wars heat up this Christmas, we will once again be the winners, and losers, of this epic struggle.

Sure, we'll be able to pick from the biggest selection of the most dynamic games ever created. But we'll also be

forced to choose between systems just like gamers did more than two decades ago when Mattel and Magnavox first stepped into the fray against Atari. Ever since, the market has been fragmented amongst at least two hardware platforms, and we appear destined for such a frustrating fate yet again.

Our forecast? Despite the companies' best efforts to bring the coolest games to their platforms, we predict they'll split the market three ways. No one will own more than 50 percent of the market, and no system will play every single game.

Meanwhile, we'll pine for the day when game consoles have the same universal compatibility of every other

software-playing consumer electronic, including cassettes, VCRs, and DVDs. And as we listen to Everclear on our Panasonic boombox, or our Alpine car stereo, or our Yamaha 5-disc changer, we can't help but look forward to a time when we'll be able to fire up Zelda on our GameCube, PS2 or Xbox.

Joe Funk
(jfunk@hsmedia.com)

Got a question or comment? Cheesed off because we left your favorite game out of the buyer's guide? Drop us a line at vgr@hsmedia.com, so we can respond in a future issue.



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We played tons of truly rotten games to recommend 30 pages of good ones. You're welcome.

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Devil May Cry



Capcom's Devil May Cry
for PlayStation 2

Video Game *Review*

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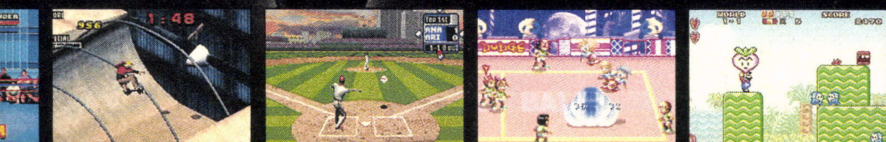
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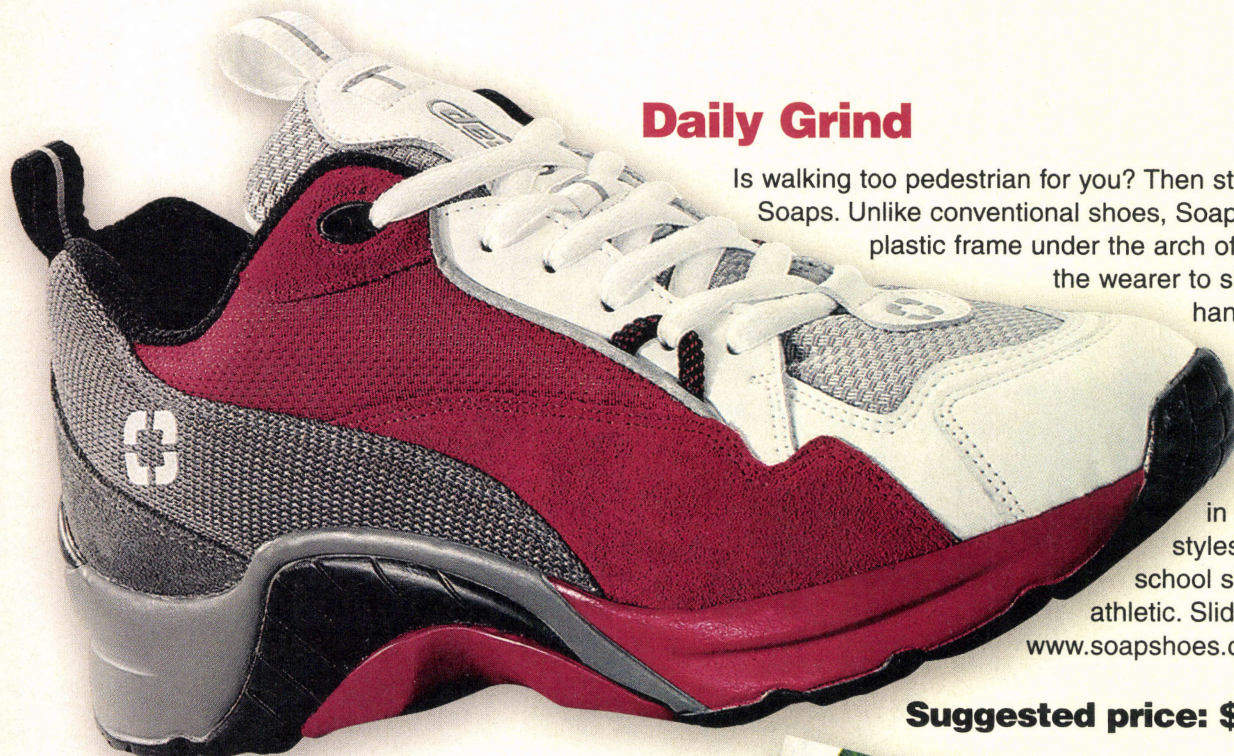
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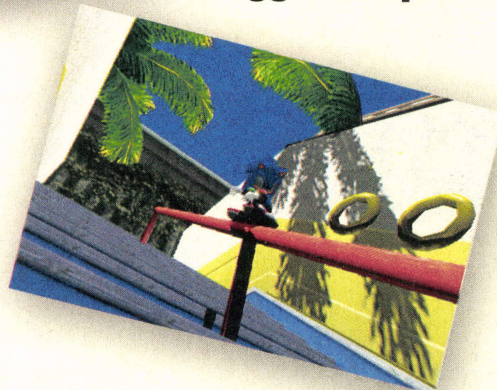




Daily Grind

Is walking too pedestrian for you? Then strap on a pair of Soaps. Unlike conventional shoes, Soaps have a concave plastic frame under the arch of the foot, allowing the wearer to slide, or "grind," along handrails, curbs and other objects (like Sonic the Hedgehog in Sonic Adventure 2). The shoes are available in 49 colors and 13 styles, ranging from "old-school skate" to high-tech athletic. Slide on over to www.soapshoes.com for more info.

Suggested price: \$60 - 110



Shock Treatment

Are you "all thumbs"? Then you might want to protect your new Game Boy Advance from bumps, bounces and drops with Interact's Bumper GBX. The dense rubber case also comes with a detachable carrying strap.

Suggested price: \$9.99



Rock 'Em, Sock 'Em Redux

Aspiring prize fighters and *Jerry Springer* guests take note: Toy maker Manley Toy Quest has brought the hard-hitting action of Rock 'Em, Sock 'Em Robots into the 21st century with the Wireless Ready 2 Rumble — Round 2 boxing game. To play, you and your opponent strap on a pair of “digital” boxing gloves and start swinging. Like magic, the game’s pint-size pugilists spring to life, replicating your actions! If you land the right punch, your opponent will kiss the canvas. In addition to loads of familiar voices and sounds, the game includes two popular figures, Afro Thunder and Joey T., from the Ready 2 Rumble video games. You can also collect other figures and plug them into the game.

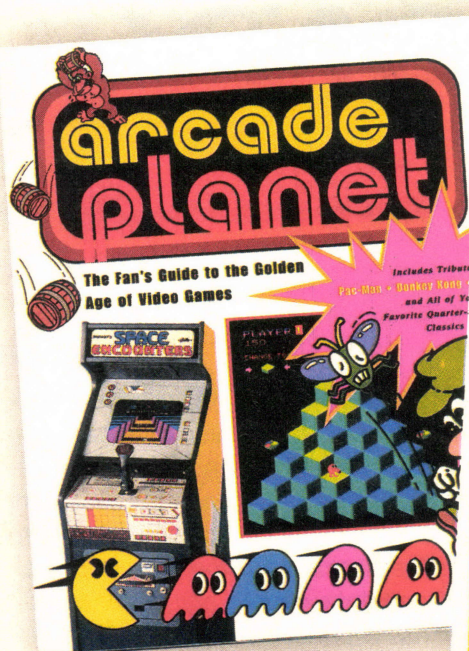
Suggested price: \$90



Required Reading

Everybody knows pop duo Buckner and Garcia scored a top-ten hit in 1982 with the deliciously cheesy “Pac-Man Fever,” but can you name their follow-up? Do you know which video game inspired a *Seinfeld* episode? You’ll find the answers to these head-scratchers and many more in *Arcade Fever — The Fan’s Guide to the Golden Age of Video Games*. Written by entertainment journalist (and avid video-game junkie) John Sellers, the 160-page book contains loads of interesting bits and bytes from the age of Atari and Air Jordans, including vintage artwork from the games you used to ditch school to play. By Running Press. ■

Suggested price: \$18.95



This Just In

Launch Dates and Prices Revealed for GameCube, Xbox

Computer entertainment giants Microsoft and Nintendo, after maintaining poker faces for months, finally laid their cards on the table at Los Angeles' Electronic Entertainment Expo (May 17-19). Nintendo's next-generation video game console, GameCube, will debut in North America on Nov. 5 and will cost \$199, while Microsoft's first foray into the category, Xbox, will launch on Nov. 8 and cost \$299.

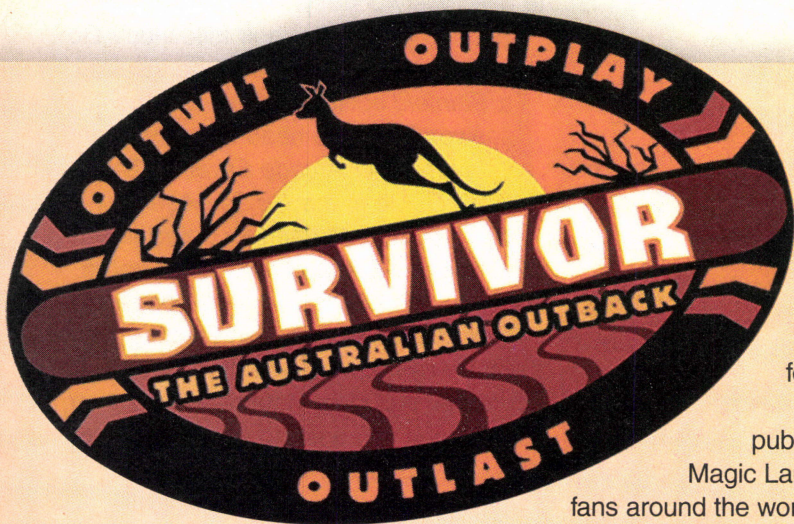
Gentlemen, let's get rrrrrr-ready to rrrrr-rumble!!!



AOL Joins Sony's Buddy List

Microsoft and Nintendo weren't the only ones making big E³ news; Sony bolstered its already-strong PlayStation 2 by announcing a strategic alliance with the world's largest Internet access provider, America Online. Under the agreement, Sony and AOL will work together to provide the "AOL experience," including instant messaging, chat and e-mail, to PS2 owners.

In November, Sony will release a network adaptor for PS2. The device, which will retail for \$39.95, combines high-speed Ethernet connection with a V90 analog modem in a single unit.



Infogrames Acquires Survivor License

Do you and your friends want to test your survival skills — without journeying to the Australian outback or eating cow brains? You'll be able to later this year, when software publisher Infogrames unleashes a whole slew of licensed *Survivor* games for the PC, Mac and home video-game consoles. The first game, based on the *Survivor: The Australian Outback* series, is being published by Infogrames' WizardWorks division and is developed by Magic Lantern Playware "Survivor has captivated and attracted legions of fans around the world," said Paul Rinde, senior vice president and general manager of Wizardworks. "We're confident that we can meld all of the key aspects of the Survivor concept with the latest technology to create immersive and compelling games."

Sega Game Gurus Gather at E³

At an E³ press conference, Sega of America President and COO Peter Moore revealed the company's new aim: to become the No. 1 third-party software publisher in the world by holiday 2003. Fortunately for Moore, he brought a little backup, namely representatives of Sega's 11 worldwide development studios. Among them were Yu Suzuki (Virtua Fighter, Shenmue), Yuji Naka (Sonic the Hedgehog, Phantasy Star Online) and Toshihiro Nagoshi (Daytona, Virtua Striker). After discussing their current projects, the game gurus posed for a once-in-a-lifetime photo opportunity.



Driver 2 a Certified Blockbuster

What do Cristina Aguilera, Russell Crowe and Infogrames' Driver 2 for PlayStation all have in common (aside from the fact that they all look hot in skirts)? They were all recently honored at the seventh annual Blockbuster Entertainment Awards, one of the world's largest publicly voted awards shows. Driver 2 was named "Video Game of the Year" by Blockbuster customers, who voted at more than 5,400 stores in the U.S. and abroad and on the company's Web site. (Aguilera and Crowe were named "Favorite Female Recording Artist" and "Surliest Australian Actor," respectively.)

"This prestigious award, combined with over 2 million units sold to date worldwide, confirms that Driver 2 is one of the hottest properties in the interactive entertainment industry," said Sarah Buxton, vice president of marketing for Infogrames. ■

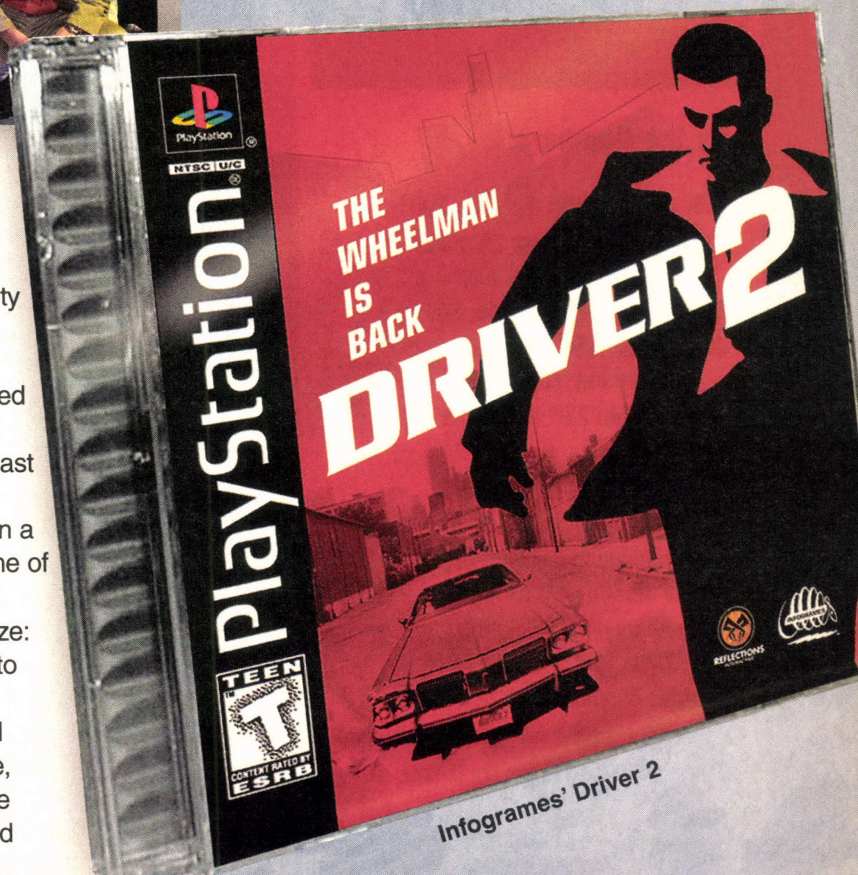
Female Driver Terrorizes San Francisco

Who says women can't drive? Certainly not University of Illinois freshman Lindsay Gall, winner of Sega's Dreamcast Championships, held on April 7 at San Francisco's Bimbo's 365 Club. Having previously qualified for the championships at one of Sega's 500+ Mobile



Crazy Taxi champion
Lindsay Gall

Assault Tour stops last year, Gall spanked nine other finalists in a white-knuckled game of Crazy Taxi to take home the grand prize: \$15,000 and a trip to Jamaica. San Francisco's Michael Piring and St. Anne, Illinois' Roger Mogle came in second and third, respectively.





By the Numbers:

U.S. Availability: June 11, 2001

Production Volume: 24 million worldwide in first year

Suggested Retail Price: \$99.95

CPU: 32-bit RISC-CPU with embedded memory

LCD Screen: 2.9" Reflective TFT Color LCD

Display Size: 1.61" x 2.41"

Resolution: 240 x 160 pixels

Color: Simultaneously displays up to 32,768 colors

Size: Approximate Height 3.23" / Width 5.69" / Depth 0.96"

Weight: About 4.94 oz

Power Supply: 2 AA Alkaline batteries

Battery Life: 15 hours continuous play

Advance Attack



NINTENDO'S LONG-AWAITED NEXT-GENERATION HANDHELD IS NOT YOUR LITTLE BROTHER'S OR SISTER'S GAME BOY.

By Gary Mollohan

Nintendo's Game Boy handheld video-game system may have buried half a dozen competitors during its decade-long lifespan — remember the Atari Lynx? How about Sega's Game Gear or Tiger Electronic's game.com? — but there was one thing it (like former teen idol Cory Haim, who also rose to prominence during the '80s) could never quite put to rest: its childish image.

Due in no small part to the cultural phenomenon known as Pokémon, any adult seen playing Game Boy in public risked ridicule, scorn and remaining dateless on Saturday night. However, Nintendo's next-generation Game Boy, thanks to a quantum leap forward in graphics, sound and — dare we say — “coolness,” erases this stigma. And while it still may not be as acceptable as, say, playing Solitaire on your Palm Pilot, it's a helluva lot more fun.

Other Stuff You'll Want

While most people were content to come away with a system and a couple of games on launch day, peripheral maker Interact tempted others with an array of Game Boy Advance-ready add-ons, including:



Sport Shell Hard Case (\$14.99) —

Constructed of impact-resistant plastic, the case is great for organizing and protecting your GBA, games and accessories when you're on the go. Plus, it's got a shoulder strap and is totally weather resistant.

Power Pak (\$14.99) —

Tired of spending a fortune on batteries? This 15-hour rechargeable battery pack, which includes a bonus cradle/stand, is the answer.



PowerRumble FX (\$24.99) —

This handy gizmo combines a 12-15 hour battery, dual stereo speakers, rubberized hand grips and a built-in rumble motor into one package.



PlayLine Link Cable (\$7.99) —

This 5-foot cable allows you to play multi-player games on the GBA and comes with a pass-thru port that allows you to connect other accessories.

• Playline X4 Multiplayer Link Cable — If you really want to go all out, this device reduces prep time and clutter by allowing up four GBA players to jack into one cable (not pictured).

Advance Attack

The Gear

Aptly called Game Boy Advance (GBA), the \$99.95 device boasts a bigger screen, longer battery life and better graphics than the original Game Boy, which has sold 100 million systems and 405 million games since its 1989 release.

With a new horizontal orientation and dual shoulder buttons for finer control, the system has a 2.9" color LCD screen said to deliver a sharper picture than a Nintendo 64 playing on a 27" television. Its 32-bit processor runs 17 times faster and displays more than 10 times as many on-screen colors as Game Boy Color. What's more, it plays all existing Game Boy games and can be linked with up to three other GBAs — without a special hub peripheral — for multi-player gaming.

"There has never been a portable game system like Game Boy Advance," boasts Peter Main, Nintendo's executive vice president of sales and marketing. "It's like playing TV video games in the palm of your hand."

The Games

Some 15+ titles, each retailing for between \$29.95 and \$39.95, were available for the system at its June 11 launch, with 60 more expected to arrive by Christmas. Leading the charge were **Super Mario Advance** and **F-Zero: Maximum Velocity**, both updates of successful Nintendo franchises.

Super Mario Advance is based on the Nintendo

Entertainment System (NES) classic **Super Mario Bros. 2** and contains a colorful cast of selectable characters — including Mario, brother Luigi, the diminutive but powerful Toad and Princess Peach — and familiar yet challenging side-scrolling gameplay. The two-game cartridge offers a version of the arcade classic **Mario Bros.**, in which players attempt to rid a sewer of pesky turtles, crabs and other pests.

F-Zero is a visually striking update of the Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES) game. Although this futuristic antigravity racing game appears to sport true 3-D graphics, it actually uses clever sprite scaling and rotation to produce the elusion of depth.

While it wasn't available at launch, a GBA version of the popular **Mario Kart** is also in the works.

Third-party software publisher Majesco's impressive launch lineup included **Iridion 3-D**, **Earthworm Jim** and **Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure**.

Like **F-Zero**, **Iridion 3-D** uses visual sleights of hand to simulate true 3-D graphics. Piloting a futuristic spacecraft, players must battle hostile



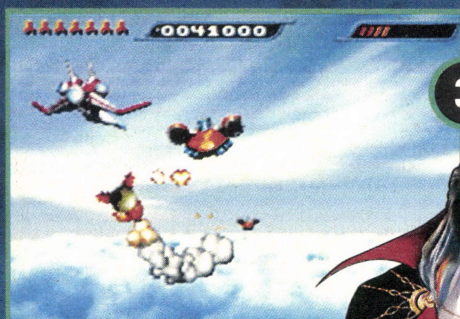
alien invaders across seven unique locations, ranging from Earth to the Iridion Star System. In addition to multiple weapons and five bonus weapons, the game has seven enormous — well, as enormous as anything can appear on a 2.9" screen — bosses to battle.

Based upon the SNES original, Earthworm Jim introduces a new generation of gamers to the cartoonish graphics and gameplay that made Earthworm Jim an instant classic. Assuming the role of an ordinary earthworm in an extraordinary bionic spacesuit, players travel through seven warped worlds, interacting with flying cows, a puppy with a nasty temper and a goldfish bent on controlling the universe.

Based on another SNES hit, Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure reunites gamers with the

adventure-seeking jungle explorer, Pitfall Harry, Jr. Young Harry must defeat ferocious crocodiles, deadly jaguars and wicked warriors to rescue his father from the evil Mayan spirits holding him captive. ■

1. Nintendo's Super Mario Advance
2. Nintendo's F-Zero: Maximum Velocity
3. Majesco's Iridion 3-D
4. Majesco's Earthworm Jim
5. Majesco's Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure
6. Ubi Soft's Rayman Advance



Advance Attack

In classic Pitfall fashion, players must swing on vines, hop over pits and leap over crocodile heads, as well as bungee-jump, boomerang and mine car their way to safety.

In addition to these titles, Majesco plans to release several more GBA titles this year, including the puzzle/strategy game **Fortress**, flight sim **F-14 Tomcat** and **Dark Arena**, an ambitious first-person shooter in the same vein as Doom or Quake.

Ubi Soft's limbless hero, Rayman, returns to his 2-D origins in **Rayman Advance**. The game, a level-by-level optimization of the PlayStation original, contains 60 levels and six worlds of surreal platform action. The object is to rescue the Toons, light-giving sprites vital to the world's harmony, from the incorrigible Mr. Dark. In addition to Golden Fist power-ups, you can scour the land for "Tings," used to unlock hidden levels.

Would-be "Stone Cold" Steve Austins and Lenix Lewises will want to check out Bam! Entertainment's **Fire Pro Wrestling** and Midway's **Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2**.

While it lacks a roster of big-name American stars, Fire Pro Wrestling features 150 unique grapplers, each with his own fighting style, animations and finishing moves. You can also create and save up to 66 mat monsters of your own, choosing from an arsenal of more than 1,200 crippling moves. The game contains seven play modes, including single-elimination tournaments, tag-

team contests, death matches and four-player Battle Royals.

Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2 is a pint-size version of the Sega Dreamcast and PlayStation 2 favorite. The game contains a large roster of off-the-wall fighters — including Michael Jackson and Shaquille O'Neill — a rotating 3-D ring, loads of play modes and a special appearance by ring announcer Michael ("Let's get rrrrrrr-ready to rrrrrrr-rumble!") Buffer.

Mountain Dew-drinkin', extreme sports-lovin' skater types are sure to love **Activision's Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2**. Like the ultra-popular PlayStation version, the game pushes the GBA hardware to the limit by offering 3-D free-roaming skating through a number of highly interactive real-world locales. The game includes 12 top pros — including the bird man himself — and a mind-numbing array of grabs, grinds, manuals and other tricks.

3DO continues to flog its workhorse Army Men franchise with **Army Men Advance**. Playing as either the Sarge or ace reporter Vikki, gamers battle the villainous Tan army across 17 real-world and plastic-soldier-world levels. In addition to

SharkLight

(\$9.99) — The battery-powered LED light is designed to resemble a shark. Similar to Nyko's multimillion-selling Worm Light for Game Boy Color, the SharkLight has a bendable wire and a built-in reflection cup to focus light on the GBA's screen.

Bumper GBX

(\$9.99) — This dense rubber guard protects your GBA from bumps, bounces and drops and includes a detachable carrying strap.

A fuchsia Game

Boy Advance will join the white, violet and translucent blue models shortly after launch.

12



loads of weapons and enemies, the game has interactive environments and controllable tanks and boats.

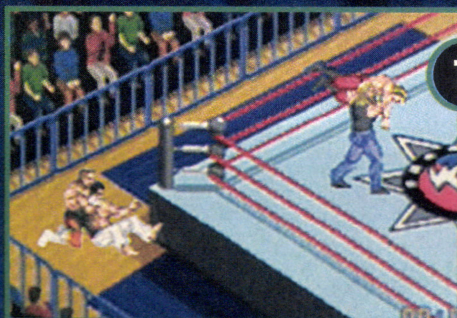
The company's **High Heat Major League Baseball 2002** looks more impressive. This handheld adaptation of its long-running hardball sim contains unique ballparks for every team, accurate 2001 player rosters, five different play modes, nine different pitches and an auto-fielding option for little leaguers.

GBA's launch lineup included another sports title, albeit a decidedly less serious one: **Atlus' Dodge Ball Advance**. Based on everybody's favorite playground sport, this over-the-top game includes nine international teams and 50 devastating super throws to terrorize the competition. You can even create your own custom team and compete against a friend, thanks to the

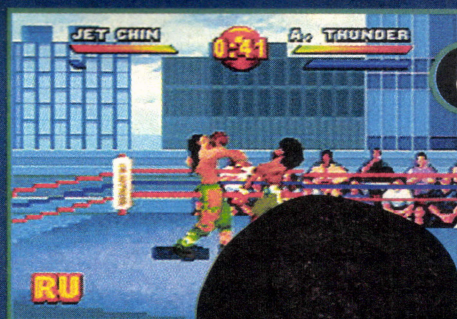
game's Link option.

Rounding out the launch titles were **Kemco's Top Gear GT Championship** and **Tweety and the Magic Jewel**.

7. Bam! Entertainment's **Fire Pro Wrestling**
8. Midway's **Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2**
9. Activision's **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2**
10. 3DO's **Army Men Advance**
11. 3DO's **High Heat Major League Baseball 2002**
12. Atlus' **Dodge Ball Advance**



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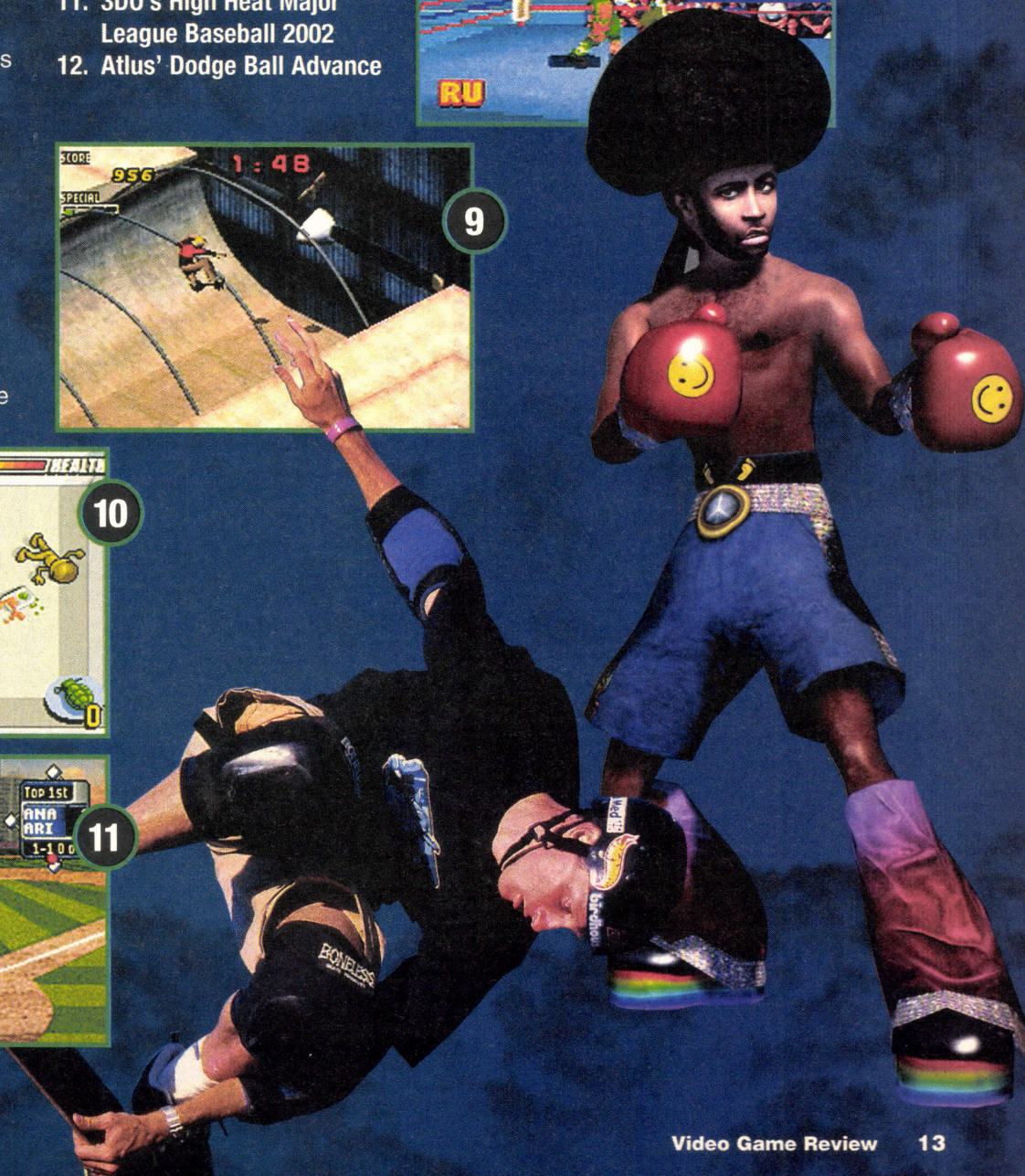
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Coming Soon

New Titles for Game Boy Advance

Mario Kart

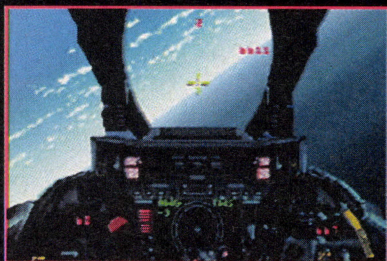
Publisher: Nintendo **Release:** TBD



The game that started the big-headed kart racing craze. Select your favorite Super Mario Bros. character and hit the track — just watch out for the banana peels.

F-14 Tomcat

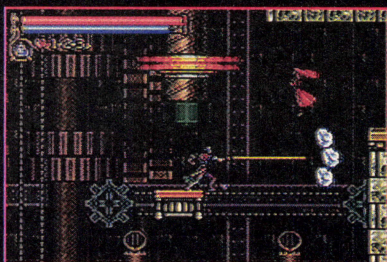
Publisher: Majesco **Release:** Summer



This sharp-looking flight sim is sure to remind more than a few gamers of Top Gun for the NES. The game includes carrier landings, real-world aircrafts, multi-player dogfights and more.

Castlevania: Circle of the Moon

Publisher: Konami **Release:** Summer



Import gamers have been raving about this one since its Japanese release. The game's graphics and gameplay are highly reminiscent of the now-classic Castlevania: Symphony of the Night for PlayStation.

Dark Arena

Publisher: Majesco **Release:** Fall



Put that GBA Link cable to work with a blood-soaked Doom-style deathmatch. This visually impressive title contains texture-mapped 3-D characters, sharp lighting effects, destructible objects and more.

Fortress

Publisher: Majesco **Release:** July

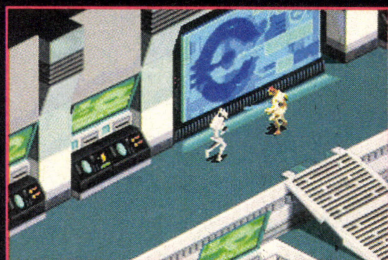


This colorful puzzler is said to play like a cross between Tetris and the classic arcade game Rampart. Build your own castle, then defend it against up to three other computer or human opponents.



Star Wars Episode One: Jedi Power Battles

Publisher: THQ **Release:** Q4



The so-so PlayStation game comes to GBA. Play as one of three Jedi in this lightsaber-swingin' free-for-all. One cool feature: a two-player option lets you battle side-by-side with a pal.

Jimmy Neutron, Boy Genius

Publisher: THQ **Release:** Fall



Nickelodeon's boy genius with the Dairy Queen hairstyle comes to GBA in this action/platform game. Look for guest appearances by Jimmy's robot dog, Goddard, and best friend, Carl Wheezer.

Power Rangers Time Force

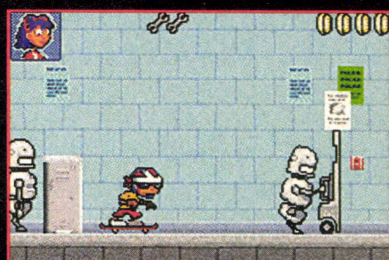
Publisher: THQ **Release:** Fall



Journey through time, use a number of Power Ranger devices and take control of the Time Force Megazord in this GBA title. The game also contains pre-rendered characters and comic-book-style cut scenes.

Rocket Power

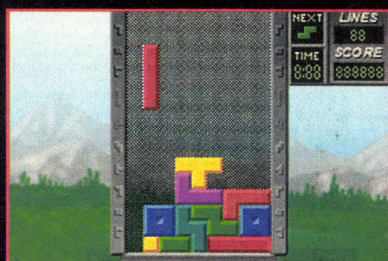
Publisher: THQ **Release:** Summer/Fall



Skate or die in this GBA adaptation of the popular Nickelodeon cartoon. Contains all your favorite Rocket Power characters, including Otto, Twister, Sam and Reggie.

Tetris Worlds

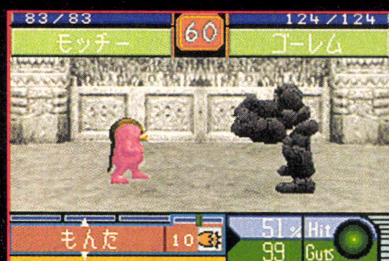
Publisher: THQ **Release:** Q4



Oldsters will remember that it was Tetris that helped popularize the original Game Boy. The game includes seven unique worlds, each with its own rules for playing the mother of all puzzle games.

Monster Rancher 2 Go

Publisher: Tecmo **Release:** TBD



Suezo, Mocchi, Pixie and friends return in this Pokémon-style monster-breeding sim, said to play like the popular Monster Rancher 2 for PlayStation.

Pinobee

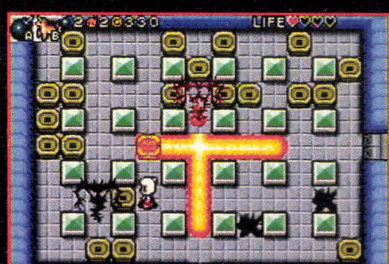
Publisher: Activision **Release:** TBD



Pinobee's pre-rendered graphics and side-scrolling platform action are sure to remind longtime gamers of the original Gex. Expect loads of insectoid enemies in this honey of an adventure.

Bomberman Tournament

Publisher: Activision **Release:** TBD



The explosive multi-player party game comes to GBA. Like the recent Dreamcast version, Bomberman Tournament contains a ton of new play modes as well as the old favorites. ■

"Going, Going, Gone!"

SNAG THESE HOT GAME BOY COLOR TITLES BEFORE THEY DISAPPEAR FOR GOOD

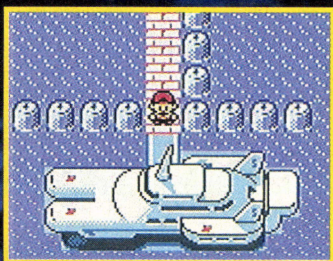
By Gary Mollohan

We know you're chomping at the bit to play Super Mario Advance, Sonic Advance and all the other great new Game Boy Advance (GBA) titles hitting the market. But wait a minute — there's a ton of great Game Boy Color games out there too, all of which are 100% compatible with that brand-spankin'-new GBA of yours. But you'd better hurry; most of these gems have been on the market for a while and are on the verge of disappearing for good.

Pokémon Gold & Silver

Publisher: Nintendo

Description: 1.4 million Pokémon fans can't be wrong! That's how many people bought the long-awaited sequels to the original Pokémon Game Boy games during their first week of availability, and it's not hard to understand why; in addition to



an entire new world to explore, the games contain 100 new critters to capture and train, a built-in clock that allows the game to mirror the real-life time of day, and a new monster breeding feature. While many dismiss Pokémon as strictly kids's stuff, Pokémon Gold & Silver have enough secrets and depth to challenge even the most experienced gamers.

Best feature: Built-in clock

Buy it if you're a fan of: The original Pokémon games or RPGs in general.

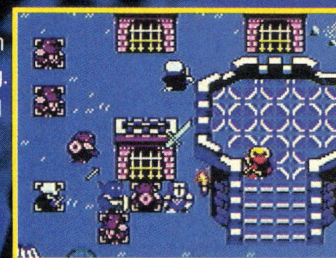
Warlocked

Publisher: Nintendo

Description: Real-time strategy on the Game Boy? You must be joking. Believe it or not, Warlocked is solid enough to compete with many PC strategy games. After siding with either the humans or the beasts, you must harvest resources, construct buildings, muster troops and lead them into battle. There are also powerful wizards to rescue and dragon eggs to hatch. As an added bonus, you can pit your army against a friend's via the Game Boy's Link cable.

Best feature: Amusing use of voice

Buy it if you're a fan of: Real-time strategy games like Command & Conquer.



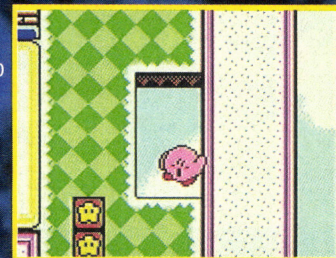
Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble

Publisher: Nintendo

Description: Think the decade-old Game Boy has nothing new to offer? Think again. In Kirby's Tilt 'n' Tumble, players guide everybody's favorite pink puffball through a number of challenging obstacle courses by tilting their Game Boys. You can also make Kirby jump by snapping your Game Boy or rev him up by shaking it. The game also has a number of challenging mini games to spice up the action.

Best feature: The game's unusual, responsive controls

Buy it if you're a fan of: Those old-school games in which you had to guide a ball bearing through a maze.



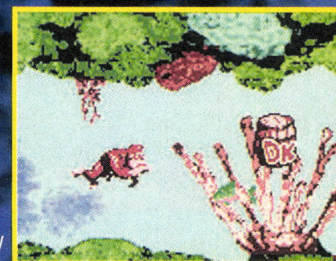
Donkey Kong Country

Publisher: Nintendo

Description: Released during the twilight of the Super Nintendo's lifespan, the original Donkey Kong Country wowed gamers with its excellent graphics and deep gameplay. While this Game Boy Color adaptation won't grab you by the short 'n' curlies like the original, it is an amazingly faithful rendition for a portable. As an added bonus, the game includes some "lost" levels and brand-new mini games.

Best feature: The recently unearthed "lost" levels

Buy it if you're a fan of: The original or platform games in general.



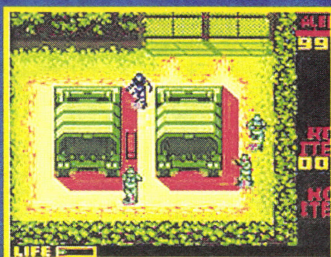
Metal Gear Solid

Publisher: Konami

Description: Can't wait for Metal Gear Solid 2? Then relive Solid Snake's 2-D glory days with this amazingly faithful Game Boy adaptation of the PlayStation hit. In addition to loads of familiar enemies and weapons, the game is packed with 50+ stages and 180 VR Training missions. You can even challenge a friend to a round of hide-and-seek Metal Gear-style via the Link cable.

Best feature: Loads of play modes

Buy it if you're a fan of: Games that emphasize stealth over firepower.



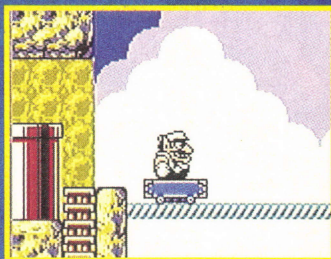
Wario Land 3

Publisher: Nintendo

Description: Kind of like Bizarro Superman, Wario is the evil counterpart of Nintendo's loveable Mario. Wario Land 3 has all of the side-scrolling jump-and-stomp gameplay that made the old-school Mario games famous. But there's a twist: Wario, unlike Mario, can't die, so the emphasis is on solving puzzles and advancing His Evilness to the next level. 25+ stages, 11 bosses and loads of mini games ensure you won't soon tire of this one.

Best feature: A main character that can't die

Buy it if you're a fan of: Wario or Mario.



The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Ages/Season

Publisher: Nintendo

Description: Developer Capcom has created not one but two new games that combine to form one sprawling adventure. In Oracle of Seasons, Link the elf must embark on a quest to find the Rod of Seasons, which has the power to transform the landscape into winter, spring, summer and fall. Similarly, the prize in Oracle of Ages is a harp that lets our hero travel through time and space. While either game can be played on its own, you have to beat them both to see the true ending.

Best feature: Manipulating time and the weather to solve puzzles

Buy it if you're a fan of: Sleep deprivation.



Mega Man Xtreme

Publisher: Capcom

Description: Publisher Capcom could have called this game "Mega Man X's Greatest Hits" because it borrows levels and characters from the Blue Dude with 'Tude's previous Super Nintendo adventures, chops them up and crams them into a tiny Game Boy

Color cartridge. Like every previous Mega Man outing to date, you can steal boss characters' powers by defeating them, bringing you one step closer to the ultimate victory. One warning: Just because the screen is smaller, don't expect the challenge to be diminished — this is one tough game!

Best feature: Borrows the best levels and characters from previous Mega Man X games

Buy it if you're a fan of: Numerous painful deaths.



Pokémon Puzzle Challenge

Publisher: Nintendo

Description: Don't let the name throw you — this game is nothing more than Tetris Attack with Pokémon window dressing. And what is Tetris attack, you ask?

Only the best two-player puzzle game ever. Players clear garbage and dump it on their opponents' heads by matching three or more cubes of the same color. While this sounds fairly simple, it creates some of the most see-saw battles seen outside of a World Wrestling Federation ring.

Best feature: Two-player Link cable battles

Buy it if you're a fan of: Puzzle games like Tetris Attack.



Dragon's Lair

Publisher: Capcom

Description: In our humble opinion, cramming the entire laser disc adventures of Dirk the Daring onto a tiny Game Boy Color cartridge is an engineering marvel on par with the International Space Station (or that dress Jennifer Lopez wore to last year's Grammys). Now you can finally slay that damn dragon — and it won't even cost you a king's ransom in quarters.

Best feature: Amazingly faithful graphics and gameplay

Buy it if you're a fan of: The arcade original.





LET THE GAMES BEGIN
X O X O

ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT

All Jak-ked Up

CRASH BANDICOOT'S
CREATORS UNVEIL
THEIR TOP-SECRET
PLAYSTATION 2 DEBUT,
JAK AND DAXTER

By Gary Mollohan



Game developers Jason Rubin and Andy Gavin are happy campers these days, but it's not because their *Crash Bandicoot* series of PlayStation games has sold more than 16 million copies worldwide.

It's also not because their design studio, Naughty Dog Inc., was recently purchased by Sony for a tidy sum. Rather, it's because they're finally creating the game they've wanted to since the original *Crash Bandicoot*: a completely off-the-rails, go-anywhere 3-D action/adventure. "This is the largest and most-impressive real-time 3-D world ever created in video game history," boasts Andy.

The game in question, *Jak and Daxter: The Precursor Legacy* (for PlayStation 2), was recently unveiled at Los Angeles' Electronic Entertainment Expo, the largest video game show in the world. It stars a spiked-haired, big-eyed, Japanese anime-looking hero, Jak, who must find a way to return his wise-cracking sidekick, Daxter, to his human form. It seems Daxter, while exploring some ruins on a forbidden island, was knocked into a vat of a magical substance, transforming him into a weasel-like rodent.

Knowing that the pressure was on to hit another home run, the Naughty Dogs began working on *Jak and Daxter* two years ago after completing *Crash Bandicoot 3*. The pair spent six months developing the game's characters before writing a single line of code. They even sought the advice of Sony's game gurus in

Japan and Europe to make sure the characters would have international appeal. (In other words, the Japanese anime influence is no accident.)

"In a lot of ways, we've matured [as game developers]," says Jason, who created his first video game at the tender age of 16. "We feel really, really good about the character designs and the way the game is going now."

Ahead of the Curve

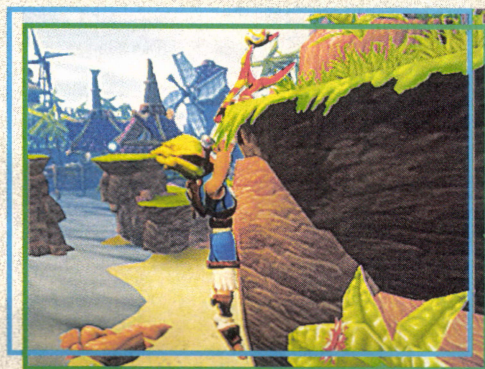
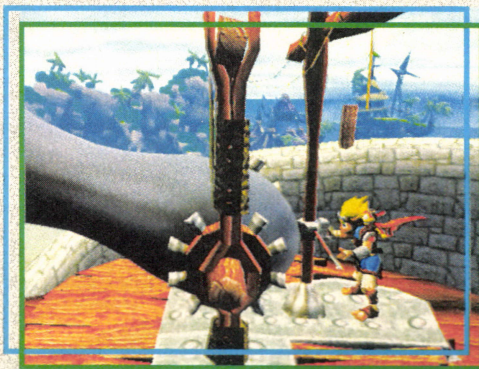
Complicating matters, *Jak and Daxter* is the first game Naughty Dog has developed for Sony's powerful but difficult to program PlayStation 2. "We were shocked when [PS2] arrived and all of the sudden we had all of these new capabilities," reveals Jason. "Being forced into a new generation was such a leap, it created a bit of a learning curve. We're now coming out of that curve and we're in our stride."

And it shows. The vibrant island world is comprised of tens of millions of polygons modeled by hand. In fact, each frame contains 100 to 300 times as many polygons as a frame from *Crash Bandicoot*. You can seamlessly roam from area to area without any load times or pop-up (the way background elements suddenly pop into view in some video games). From high vantage points you can literally see for miles,

"THIS IS THE LARGEST AND MOST-IMPRESSIVE REAL-TIME 3-D WORLD EVER CREATED IN VIDEO GAME HISTORY."

**— ANDY GAVIN,
CO-PRESIDENT, NAUGHTY DOG**



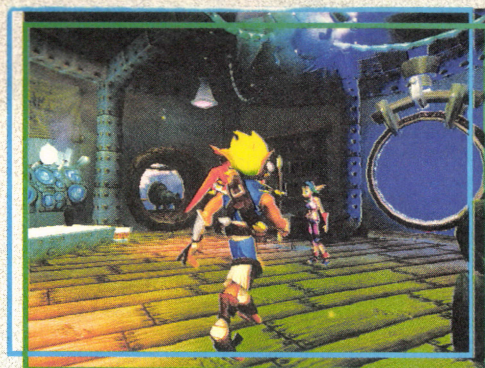


representing hours of gameplay.

Everything moves a lot more convincingly, too. "In the previous generation, most of the objects used 'canned' animation," explains Andy. "Jak and Daxter uses the power of the PlayStation 2's vector unit to animate and add real dynamics to a tremendous amount of objects in the world. Bushes blow in the wind, bridges can be bounced on and interacted with, and so on. And it's all running live — 60 frames per second through the power of the PlayStation 2."

The game's characters use an active, joint-based skinning system that enhances the quality of Naughty Dog's renowned animation. Jak — and particularly Daxter — run, jump and mug for the camera with Disney-like fluidity.

Besides all of the audio/visual wizardry, the developers added a new intelligent camera that uses line of sight to dynamically keep the character in the center of the screen and reduce motion sickness.



The Proof in the Pudding

Even though a brief demo of the game was playable at E3, most of Jak and Daxter's gameplay remains a mystery. However, the game is said to combine several genres — including action, platform, puzzles, strategy and racing — into a single adventure. One slight disappointment: You can only play as Jak. Although Daxter remains with you at all times, he's mainly there for comic relief and to offer the occasional hint.

Jak and Daxter is slated for a winter release and, with the help of Sony's marketing muscle, undoubtedly will become one of this holiday season's biggest hits. We know we're certainly Jak-ked to play it. ■



SHOOT THE

ELECTRONIC

ENTERTAINMENT





Imagine Las Vegas, with its loud machines, flashing lights and enchanting showgirls. Now imagine this atmosphere captured in the Los Angeles Convention Center, which is the size of a few football fields. Now imagine, if you will, 60,000 game creators, designers, artists and marketers all running like the bulls of Pampalona, clamoring to play every new game they can get their hands on.

Welcome to E³

Every May the Electronic Entertainment Expo, known as E³ by "people in the know," brings together the largest group of game industry professionals. And in your hands you have quite possibly the first comprehensive print show report of this year's E³.

E³ is always an extraordinary event, but the seventh annual, by all accounts, topped the previous in sheer size and power, maybe because this year's expo was all about new beginnings.

The 800-lb. gorilla Nintendo revealed its new system coming this fall, GameCube, with some cool new games from Zelda creator Shigeru Miyamoto, and showed dozens of games for the incredible Game Boy Advance.

Microsoft (the \$800-billion gorilla?) showcased more games than you can shake a stick at for its new system coming this fall, Xbox, with more than 200 game developers signed up to make titles.

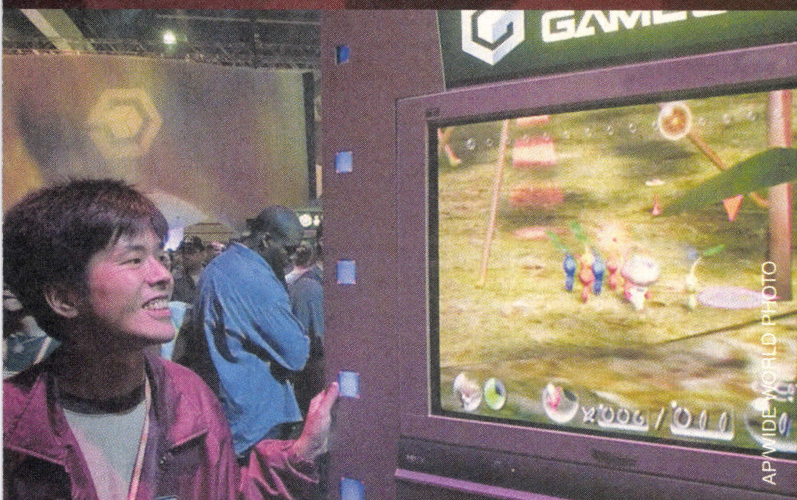
And, if that weren't enough, Sony rolled out next-generation titles for the PlayStation 2 and the PSOne, and laid out an online strategy with the potential to blow Nintendo and Microsoft away.

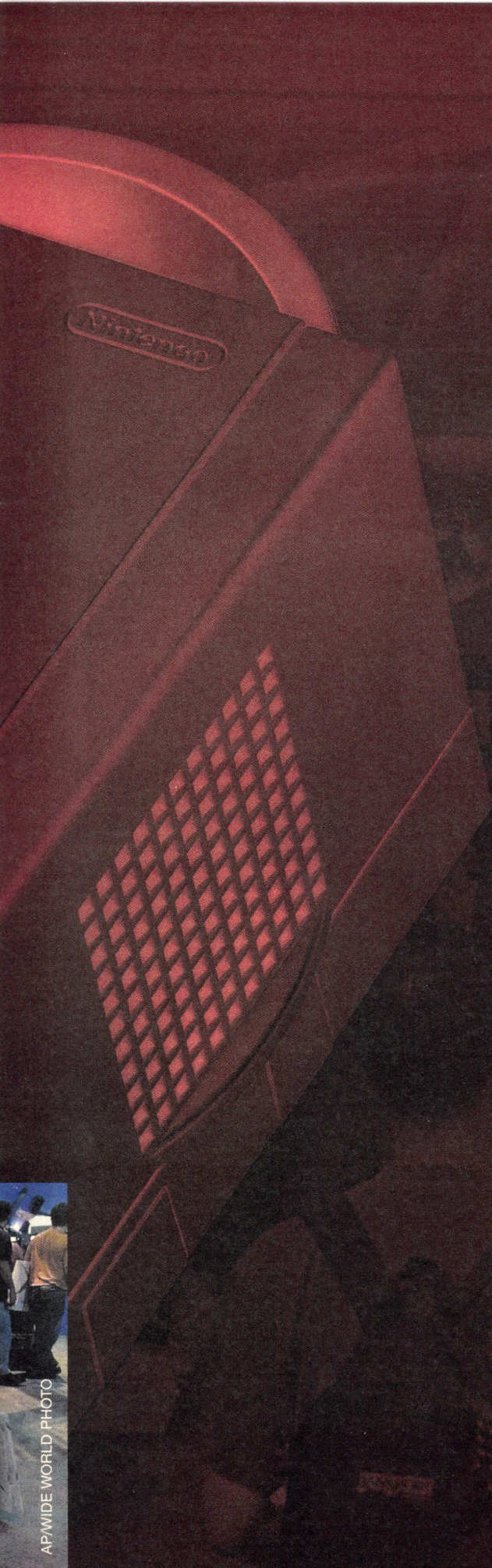
So what are you waiting for? Turn the page already.



NINTENDO
GAMECUBE

Nintendo



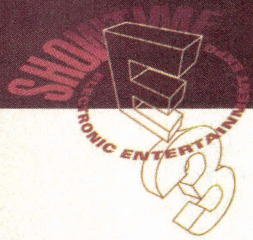


By Shane Bettenhausen

The businesslike atmosphere of E³ crumbled when a huge group of eager, screaming fans flooded the entryway to the convention center's west hall and sprinted directly to Nintendo's booth. What could have possibly inspired such rabid excitement? In a word — Nintendo. The Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube attracted massive crowds of satisfied show goers throughout the show, proving that the “Big N” is fully poised to reclaim its role as the ruler of the video game world.

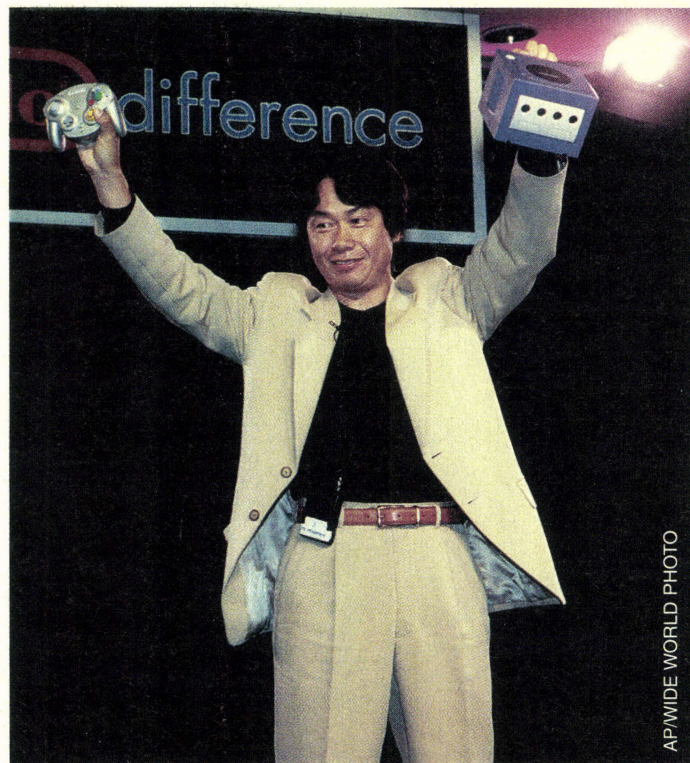


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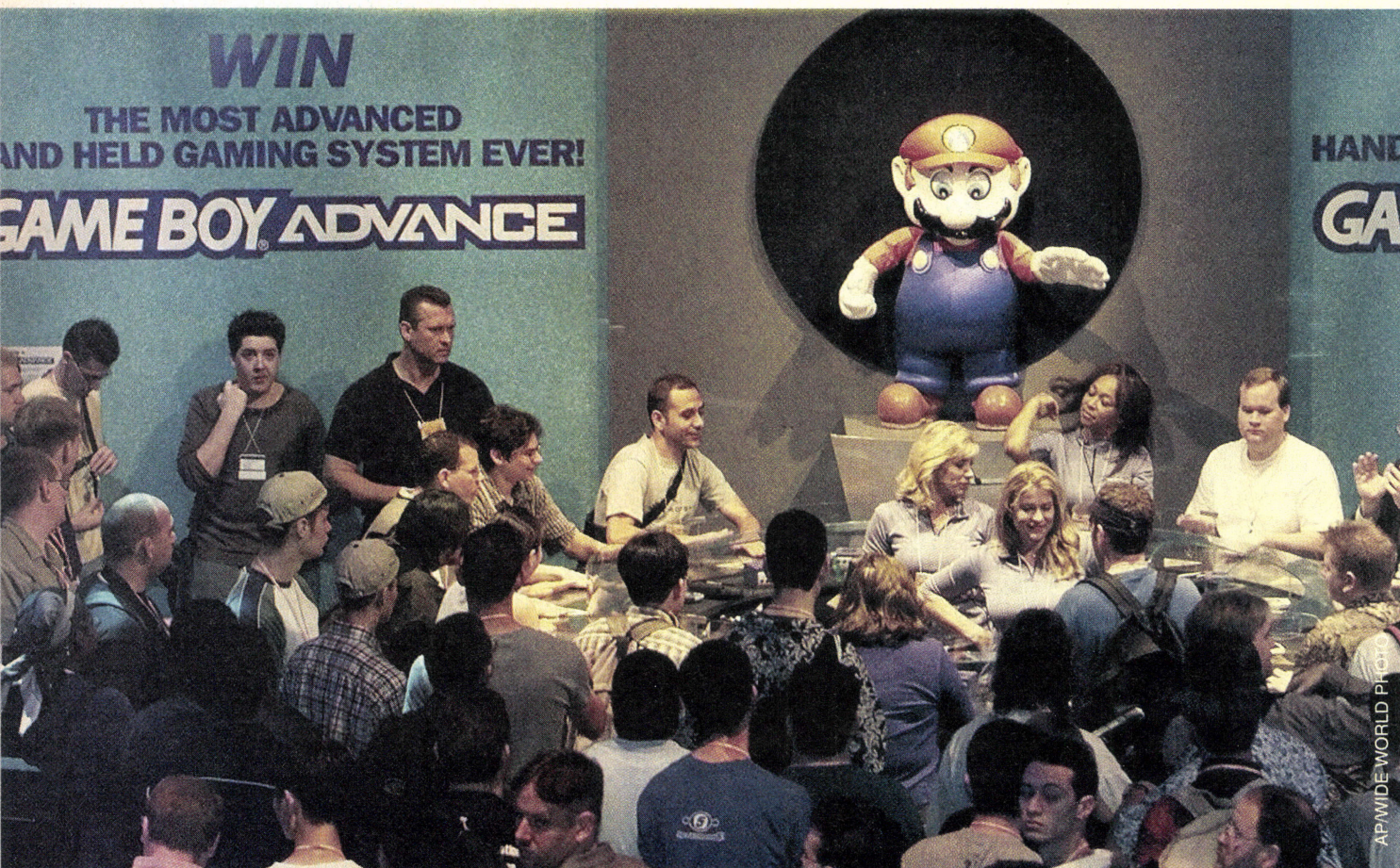


Nintendo successfully introduced its two new consoles to the American market in a festive booth packed with playable demos of new GameCube and Game Boy Advance titles. Brave attendees willing to wade through the endless sea of people and wait in lengthy lines could test-drive nine GameCube titles: Luigi's Mansion, Super Smash Bros. Melee, Pikmin, Wave Race: Blue Storm, Star Wars Rogue Squadron II, NBA Courtside 2002, Starfox Adventures: Dinosaur Planet, Eternal Darkness and Kameo: Elements of Power. Although many fans would have preferred to see a traditional Mario title or next Zelda at E³, these nine games were all spectacular in their own rights. Plus, Nintendo hinted that we might see some more familiar faces on GameCube by year's end. Is the GameCube worth all of this hype and hoopla?

(right) Mario creator Shigeru Miyamoto triumphantly reveals GameCube. (below) Show attendees try to win a free Game Boy Advance.



AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTO



AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTO

Absolutely. Nintendo has downplayed the technical specifications of its next-gen console, opting to merely focus on touting "The Nintendo Difference," a strategic combination of innovation, quality, beloved characters and heritage. Even if Nintendo doesn't want to talk numbers, it's obvious that the GameCube is still a technical breakthrough, and games like Luigi's Mansion and Rogue Squadron II look markedly better than anything on either PlayStation 2 or Xbox.

The system itself is also revolutionary – it's stylish, small and easily portable. So much thought has gone into the design of the controller that when you finally hold it in your hands, the comfortable feel and instinctive button layout all seem perfect. Unlike the PS2, the GameCube does not play DVD movies, as Nintendo envisioned it as purely a game console. However, Panasonic did display a sleek, silver-gilded GameCube/DVD hybrid at the show that will be coming to the U.S. at some later date. GameCube has one other secret weapon in its arsenal that neither PS2 nor Xbox can challenge – price. On November 5th, (three days before the Xbox debuts) the GameCube will launch at a \$199 price point. The magical combination of an affordable price, technical superiority and amazing games should immediately propel GameCube to the front of the next-gen console wars.

The Game Boy Advance area of Nintendo's booth wasn't nearly as claustrophobic as the GameCube zone, but fans still flocked there to scope out the successor to the 100 million-selling Game Boy. Tons of great titles were on display, many of them for the first time. With a massive lineup of quality games from Nintendo and a skilled army of third-party publishers, the GBA is gearing up to be the portable reincarnation of the Super Nintendo. The GBA will



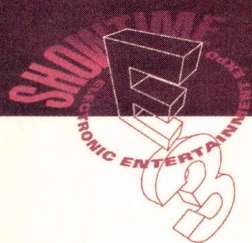
Panasonic promises to deliver a hybrid Nintendo GameCube/DVD/CD player to both the Japanese and North American markets.

also interact with the GameCube in some substantial fashion, as it can function as a controller for the GC with the aid of a special cable. Although Nintendo did not reveal the rumored Pokémon Advance at E3, the strong lineup of quality games at the show hardly made you miss those loveable critters.

Nintendo's older systems were pushed into the background to make room for all the new technology, but a handful of N64 and Game Boy Color games were on display. Standouts include Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 for N64 and Pokémon Crystal for Game Boy Color. ■



Nintendo



Key GameCube Titles

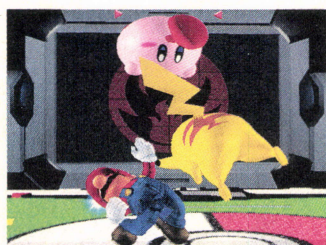
Luigi's Mansion



After being grossly ignored in Super Mario 64, Mario's brother returns with a vengeance in this spooktacular GameCube launch title. Luigi fancies himself an amateur Ghostbuster in this game, as he explores a haunted

mansion on a quest to rid it of paranormal activity. Armed only with a flashlight, a water hose and an industrial-strength vacuum cleaner, Luigi must combat the phantasmagoric hordes. This game showcases many of the GameCube's cool graphical effects like real-time shadows and volumetric fog, making it an excellent example of the GC's polygon-pushing power.

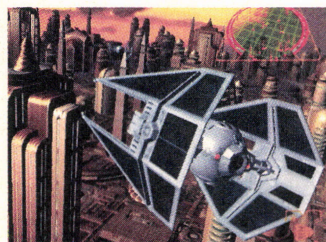
Super Smash Bros. Melee



Nintendo opened its pre-E³ press conference with this surprise title, a sequel to 1999's N64 brawling blockbuster. Once again, the many mascots are at odds in a wacky fighting free-for-all. All of the old combatants return in this

sequel, along with newcomers like Bowser, Princess Peach, Ice Climber, Princess Zelda and Sheik. The gameplay hasn't changed much (which is a good thing), but the graphics shimmer with newfound 128-bit pizzazz.

Star Wars Rogue Leader: Rogue Squadron II



Factor 5's stellar sequel floored Star Wars fans with graphics rivaling the actual films. Like its predecessor, Rogue Leader offers arcade-style missions based around the classic Star Wars trilogy. Playable levels at the show included

a frantic dogfight in Cloud City and the infamous Death Star trench battle. Arguably sporting the best graphics of any game at E³, Rogue Leader fully demonstrates the GameCube's graphical potential.



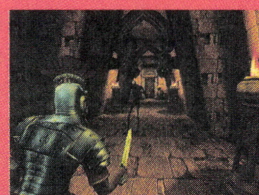
Other GameCube Titles to Watch

Pikmin



Created by Shigeru Miyamoto, the designer behind Mario and Zelda, Pikmin combines elements of real-time strategy games and 3D action platformers with the relaxing pastime of gardening (yes, gardening) to produce an entirely new type of experience.

Eternal Darkness



Another N64 title upgraded to GameCube glory, Eternal Darkness is a macabre survival horror title in the vein of Resident Evil. Impressive graphics, gruesome scenes of unspeakable horror and complex gameplay highlight this promising adventure.

Waverace: Blue Storm



This impressive sequel was playable on the show floor, drenching fans of the first Waverace with unbelievably cool new water effects, tight control and detailed levels.

NBA Courtside 2002

Nintendo's b-ball effort was playable, offering lifelike graphics, responsive control and tons of options.

Donkey Kong Racing

Shown only on video, Rare's sequel to Diddy Kong Racing features racing on roads, in the air and under the sea.

Other Game Boy Advance Titles to Watch

Advance Wars



This attractive strategy game made quite the impression at E3, thrilling audiences with its deep, rewarding gameplay and frantic four-player battles.

Breath of Fire

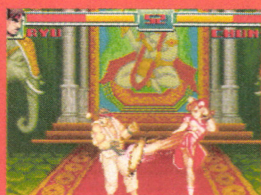


All of Capcom's GBA arcade ports looked spectacular, and this respected RPG was 100% faithful to its SNES heritage. Capcom announced that Breath of Fire II is headed to the GBA as well!

Metroid 4

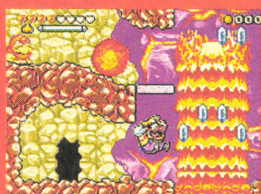
Revealed for the first time at E3, this true sequel to Super Metroid introduced a crazy new twist to the series: game grrrr! Samus Aran has combined with a metroid to form a creepy yet heroic new organism!

Street Fighter II Turbo Revival



It's difficult to imagine playing a nearly arcade perfect version of this classic fighting milestone on a portable, but somehow Capcom has pulled it off.

Wario Land

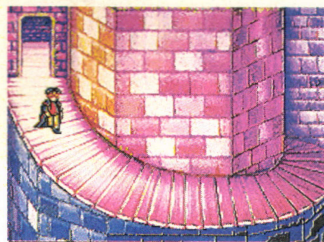


Mario's nefarious nemesis bum rushes the GBA in his fifth solo adventure. Wario can also transform into a variety of wacky forms to complete his diabolical quest for supreme wealth.



Key Game Boy Advance Titles

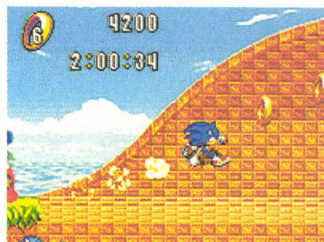
Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone



Electronic Arts reportedly shelled out a cool \$100 million for the rights to produce Harry Potter games, and this GBA action/adventure title looks to be the best of the initial titles featuring everyone's favorite wizard-in-training.

The area playable at E3 featured Harry battling vile beasts with his magic wand from a top-down isometric perspective. EA promises that the final game will feature tons of brain-teasing puzzles, massive environments and a Quidditch mini-game.

Sonic the Hedgehog Advance



Unleashed from the shackles of Sega's consoles, Sonic speeds onto the Game Boy Advance in this all-new adventure. This early version featured gameplay as either Sonic or Tails.

The levels were obviously inspired by classic locales from the 16-bit Sonic titles, yet the actual geography of the levels is completely new. The final version will contain four playable characters and a multi-player mode.

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

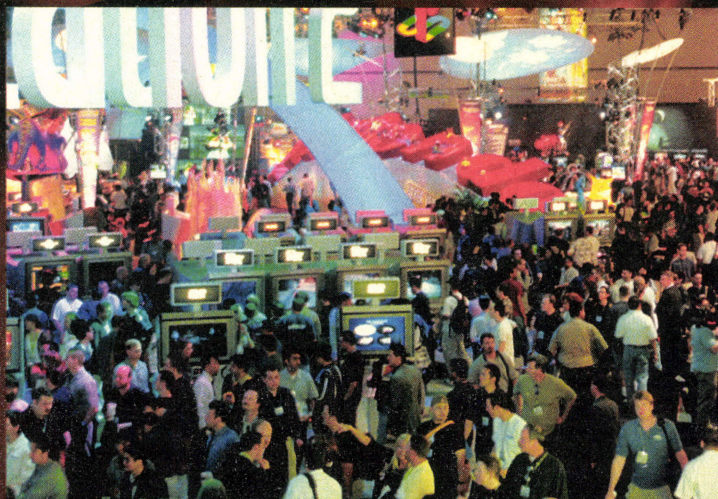


Activision offered a shockingly faithful adaptation of its popular skateboarding franchise on the GBA, proving that this little handheld has what it takes to deliver great-looking games. The key to the series' success has

been the tight, responsive control, and the GBA version mimics its console brethren perfectly.



Sony





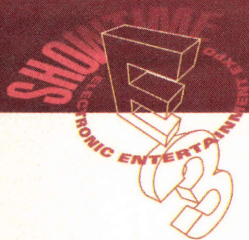
Sony's Kazuo Hirai

By Damon Brown

“I agree with the critics and the analysts that say the real question for this year and for next year is who is going to be in the number two position.” What an arrogant thing for Sony America’s Chief Operating Officer, Kazuo Hirai, to say at the show ... but oh so true.

Sony led E³ with its sheer size, as it dominated the show floor in space. The closest competitor was Nintendo, who used a good percentage of the floor to feature Game Boy titles. But it wasn’t hard to get lost in the Sony area, as visitors were submerged between the huge tree and the moving cacti on Naughty Dog’s Jak and Daxter display. The considerable crowd also took an interest in Squaresoft’s Final Fantasy X and Maximo, Capcom’s long-awaited sequel to Ghouls ‘n Ghosts.





A wide array of second-generation PlayStation 2 games were offered, as well as a few new titles for the original PlayStation. Developers are growing more familiar to the PS2, and it showed in efforts like Capcom's *Devil May Cry* and Sony's *Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec*. Even more significant, non-exclusive titles like the next *Tony Hawk Pro Skater* installments are heading to Xbox and GameCube, but the PS2 versions beat them to

A show attendee takes SCEA's awesome *Gran Turismo 3* — and Logitech's equally cool force-feedback wheel — for a test drive.

the punch, as they're already available for the system. So while Nintendo had the flash and Microsoft flaunted the cash, Sony had the games.

Sony went all out, setting up a six-player sit-down racing set-up for one of the most anticipated games of the show: *Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec*. Players stood in line for a half-hour to try their hand at game, which includes the new Logitech steering wheel/pedal system with force feedback. Both will be released in July. Sony also announced the new GT3 Racing Pack, which packages the hard-to-find system with GT3 for a cool \$329.



AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTO

The home console leader isn't resting on its laurels. It's planning a \$250 million ad campaign for North America this year and the release of more than 200 games for PS2 and PS1. Sony also asserted itself as a leader in the online game market. The Sega Dreamcast was the only competition for Sony online, and now that it has the chance to take over the market in light of Sega's demise, Sony is announcing more partnerships than "Temptation Island."

First, Sony, America Online and Netscape are getting together to make PS2 a vehicle for Internet browsing, online games and instant messages. Most importantly, these features will be easily accessible to game makers, allowing them to create more fluid conversations in multiplayer online games. (Insulting your Quake opponent has never been easier.)

Real Networks, with RealPlayer 8, and Macromedia, with the Web-based Flash Player, also will be working with Sony. And like AOL, it will be making tools available to game creators. Imagine in-game cut scenes using Real movies or online games blending Flash effects into gameplay.

Sony realizes that all this online talk means nothing without a quick, reliable infrastructure, so Sony announced partnerships with Cisco Systems to create a broadband setup (IPv4 and IPv6 dual protocol stack for all you techheads) and a new, cheap (\$39.95) network adapter coming in November, just in time to battle Nintendo and Microsoft.

As the final phase of its online strategy, Sony will offer a 40-Gig hard drive starting in November. Though the price is yet to be determined, it will have to be reasonable if PS2 is going to compete with the hard drive-equipped Xbox.

At E³, Sony's Hirai said the company's goal was to make a more consumer-friendly platform.

With graphics to rival this summer's *Final Fantasy* movie, Square EA's *Final Fantasy X* is one of PlayStation 2's "killer applications."

Ironically, the main enemy Sony will face this year is not Nintendo or Microsoft, but itself: How many consumers will be willing to shell out more money for accessories (hard drive, network adapter, etc.) that the other systems will be equipped with out of the box? ■



Sony

Key PS2 titles

Final Fantasy X



The latest installment in the classic RPG series was arguably the most impressive-looking game at the show, rivaling Sony's Gran Turismo 3 and Nintendo's Rogue Squadron II.

SquareSoft has eliminated the distant, flat backgrounds and created a more realistic 3-D world. The fighting sequences are also more realistic, providing quicker battles instead of the usual "fight and wait" time attacks. Only the first stage of the game was playable at the show, but it was enough to generate a substantial waiting line.

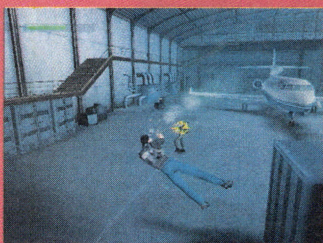
Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec



More than 150 licensed cars, strong realism, tight controls — Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec is the ultimate racing game. Though it's currently selling like hotcakes in Japan, Sony has actually

modified the U.S. version by adding two new tracks (Tokyo and Monte Carlo) and new music from Lenny Kravitz, Snoop Dogg and Raekwon from the Wu-Tang Clan. The graphics are realistic and smooth, as shown on the Tokyo track where skyscrapers and huge stadiums flow by effortlessly. The \$329 GT3/PS2 Bundle and the Logitech force feedback wheel coming in July will go a long way toward turning your home into an arcade.

Other PS2 Games to Watch



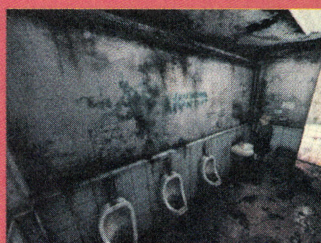
Dead to Rights

A surprise from Namco, this behind-the-shoulder action game features several unique attack options, including The Matrix-inspired slo-mo shooting; John Woo-style double pistol firing; and the sneaking up on the enemy, holding him, and shooting him with his own gun attack. Hilarious.



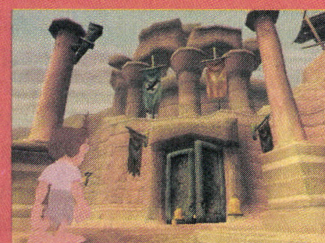
Jak and Daxter: The Precursor Legacy

As illustrated in this issue's feature story, this Rayman-esque action/adventure title from developer Naughty Dog hopes to prove that the multi-million-copy selling Crash Bandicoot creators are more than one-trick ponies.



Silent Hill 2

Easily the creepiest game show on the floor, the sequel to Konami's sleeper hit featured Resident Evil-style gameplay, really dark levels (only brightened by a dim lantern) and moving disembodied legs coming that will attack unsuspecting players. Scary.



Herdy Gurdy

Featuring Disney-quality graphics and original gameplay, featuring the herding of various animals, Eidos' game was a refreshing (and addictive) alternative to the usual blood and gore.

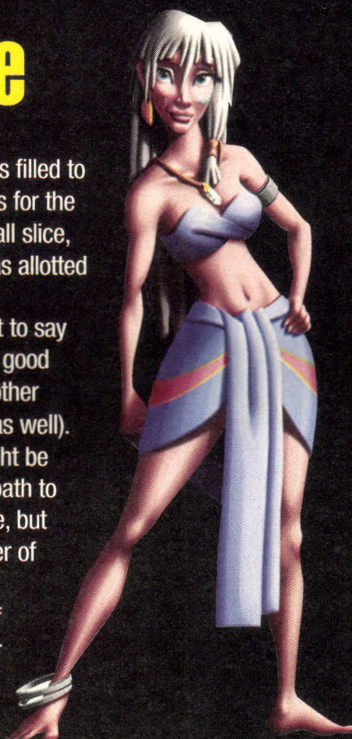
Devil May Cry



This was the show stopper, possibly because everyone wondered how Capcom managed to have one of the smoothest-playing games at E3 while simultaneously creating a visually-stunning experience. Pictures do not give it justice. From the producer and director of Resident Evil, Devil May Cry blends the intense atmosphere from the popular horror series with fast action. The lead character, the silver-haired Dante, possesses both a sword for slicing the bad guys as well as twin revolvers for taking out the heftier demons he faces on his journey through hell.

PS One

Sony's booth was filled to capacity with games for the PlayStation 2. A small slice, maybe one-fifth, was allotted to its quickly fading precursor. That's not to say there weren't some good titles there (and at other publishers' booths as well). The PlayStation might be treading down the path to its inevitable demise, but there were a number of high-quality titles available to those of you too reluctant (or too broke) to take the step into the next generation.



Key PS One Titles

The number of impressive PlayStation games far outweighed the dismal offerings you'd expect from a system on its tail-end. Perhaps because all of the crap merchants were flocking to PS2 and Xbox with their drek, the PlayStation was very respectable. Disney's Atlantis: The Lost Empire, Digimon World 2, and Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone were there to bring solid gameplay to fans of the popular series. RPG fans will have a ball with titles like Hoshigami: Ruining Blue Earth, Dragon Warrior VII, and Saiyuki: Journey West. Square may not have had any new games for the aging system, but Final Fantasy Chronicles, including the SNES classics Final Fantasy IV and Chrono Trigger were surprisingly strong. Meanwhile, Namco's stellar Tales of Destiny 2 brought action-packed RPG gameplay to new heights.

Other PS One Titles to Watch

PlayStation 2's emergence as the most popular system this E3 made sure that most PlayStation games were on the down low, and few were scattered throughout the show floor. A1 Games, publishers of budget titles that don't suck, showed off their latest titles, like the multiplayer RPG Battle Hunter and the puzzle game, Tic Tac Chicken. All in all, there were great PS One titles to be found — if you looked hard enough.



Twisted Metal: Black

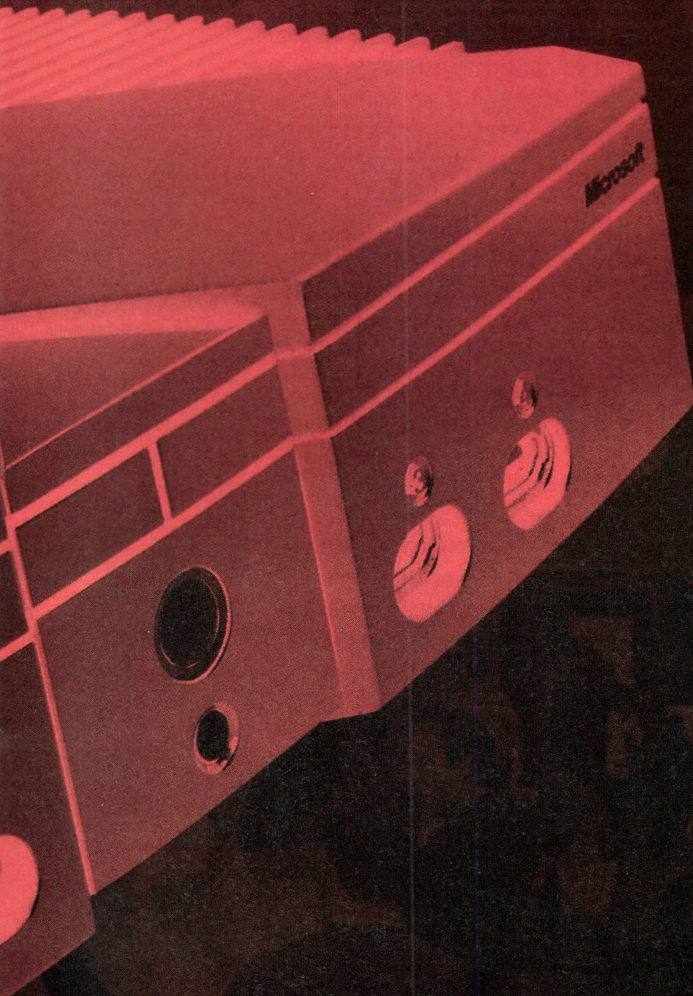
After playing Twisted Metal: Black, one can immediately tell that the original Twisted Metal development team is back. The graphics are detailed and fast moving, even in split-screen modes, and the areas are more destructible than any previous version.





Microsoft

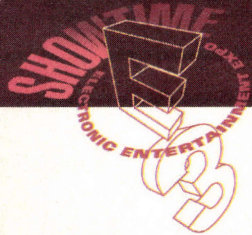




By Christopher Leonard

While Sony and Nintendo's massive E³ booths competed for space in the L.A. Convention Center's West Hall, Microsoft was buried in the recesses of the South Hall — an appropriate metaphor for the position Microsoft shall face in the video game marketplace. Accustomed to dominating markets (if not outright monopolizing them), Microsoft is now the untested outsider, the interloper, the newcomer, and its fledgling console, the XBox, will have to contend with the entrenched PlayStation 2 and the beloved franchise characters destined to appear on Nintendo's GameCube. Can Microsoft's immense marketing budget, bevy of third-party developers, and impressive hardware specs carry the XBox to the top? Only Cleo of the *Psychic Hotline* knows for sure, but Microsoft did answer some questions with its showing at E³.





The Xbox will launch in the U.S. for \$299 on November 8th, three days later and \$100 more than Nintendo's GameCube. A critical misstep by Microsoft? Possibly not. The Xbox won't be host to the likes of Mario, Zelda and Co., but it will have its own share of exclusives. First among them are the unique hardware features of a 10GB Hard Drive and a built-in Ethernet adapter. Sony plans to provide the same for its PlayStation 2 (and Nintendo with broadband and modem adapters), but a gamer will have to buy them as peripherals, separate from the actual system. Microsoft is offering everything in one box for just \$299, meaning that Microsoft will implement online gaming in the majority of its 2002 games. While PS2 and GameCube owners will be split between the broadband haves and have-nots, everyone who owns an Xbox can get online and play. In 2002, expect online Xbox versions of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, Unreal Championship, all Sega Sports titles (NBA 2K3, NFL 2K3, World Series Baseball 2K3 and NCAA College Football 2K3), Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon and more. In all likelihood, the Xbox will pick up

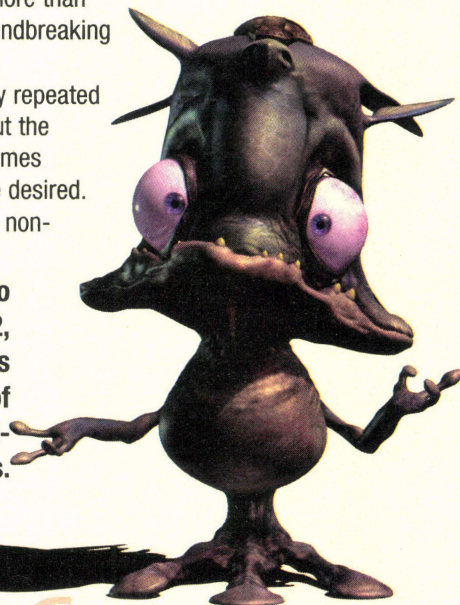
the online baton from the moribund Dreamcast.

Also, the markets for the GameCube and Xbox are not identical. Nintendo traditionally skews to a younger, more innocent crowd. Microsoft is aiming for the hipster teen-to-twenties crowd that would rather blow up cute and furry animals than raise them with love and compassion. Games like Halo, Unreal Championship, Gun Valkyrie and House of the Dead 3 — all Xbox premieres — will appeal to the older gamer. And unlike the GameCube, the Xbox will be able to play DVDs (albeit with the purchase of a separate remote controller that enables DVD playback).

No one can doubt the impressive power and features of the hardware, but the playable Xbox games on display at E³ weren't quite as ironclad as the system specs. Microsoft showed off a surprising number of playable titles, but few were able to distinguish themselves from similar games on the PlayStation 2. A couple of titles stood out, such as Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee and Halo, but others came off as poor derivatives of existing PS2 franchises (Azurik — Rise of Perathia looked and played suspiciously like Soul Reaver, and Dark Summit and Amped, two Xbox snowboarding titles, owe more than just inspiration to EA's groundbreaking SSX for the PS2).

Microsoft has adamantly repeated the mantra that it's all about the games, but the playable games shown left something to be desired. What did impress were the non-

Originally intended to land on PlayStation 2, Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee is one of Xbox's most-impressive titles.



Microsoft

playable videos of games in development. Titles like Tecmo's *Dead or Alive 3* (an Xbox exclusive), Sega's *Jet Set Radio Future*, and Dream Publishing's *Project K-X* (a fighter from a team of developers who worked on *Virtua Fighter* and *Tekken*) wowed the crowd with stunning graphics and utterly fluid animations. And titles looming on the horizon, like *Metal Gear Solid X*, *Silent Hill 2*, *Malice*, *Dino Crisis 3*, *Genma Onimusha*, *Crazy Taxi Next*, *Sega GT 2002*, *Panzer Dragoon*, and exclusive games based on such licenses as *Bruce Lee*, *The Matrix*, and Spielberg's *A.I.* prove that the Xbox will undoubtedly have an awesome second-year showing.

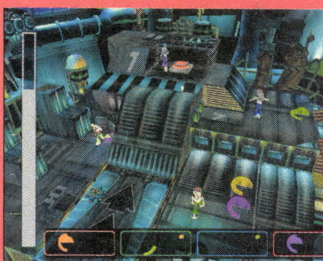
But unless Microsoft has a few surprises up its ace-loaded sleeves, the launch of the system may be a bit reminiscent of the underwhelming launch of the PlayStation 2. The question for the Xbox isn't if quality games are coming to the system; the question is will those quality titles arrive before it's too late. ■

Other Xbox Titles to Watch



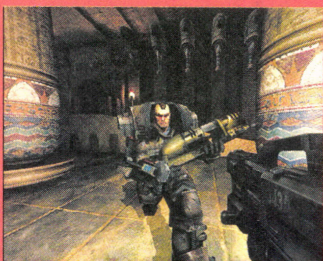
Gun Valkyrie

One of Sega's first Xbox games will be this third-person shooter loaded with alien baddies, potent weaponry, and helpful power-ups.



Fusion Frenzy

A surprisingly enjoyable party game that is an unabashed knock-off of *Mario Party*, *Crash Bash*, and the like.

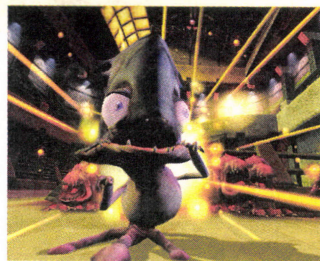


Unreal Championship

Only three months in development and it was already one of the most beautiful games on the show floor. Expect a whole lot of goodness when this one arrives online ready in 2002.

Key Xbox Titles

Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee



Abe is back once again and this time, he's joined by an amphibian creature named Munch. Munch is trying to save his species from extinction, Abe is trying to save his mom, and together they're

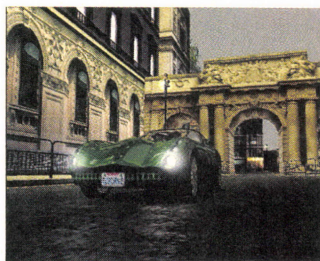
basically trying to save the world from the greedy, manipulative, cold, callous and exploitative Glukkons, Vykkers, Sligs, and Slogs of the Oddworld. Look for beautiful graphics and innovative gameplay when this third-person action/adventure/strategy game launches with the Xbox.



Halo

Drawing the longest lines for any Xbox game at E3, *Halo* is a graphical and technical marvel of a first-person shooter. Attack aliens on foot or in any vehicle you come across; by yourself or as

part of a team; on open terrain or in enclosed structures, and watch as the game transitions seamlessly from one venue to the next. The developer, Bungie, assures us that the frame-rate problems will be non-existent by the time the game launches.



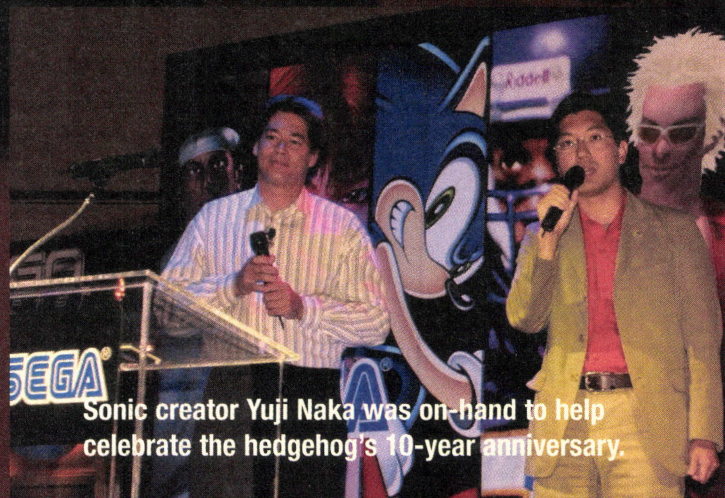
Project Gotham Racing

Metropolis Street Racer stunned us with its superlative graphics and real-world locales when it appeared last year on the Sega Dreamcast. The

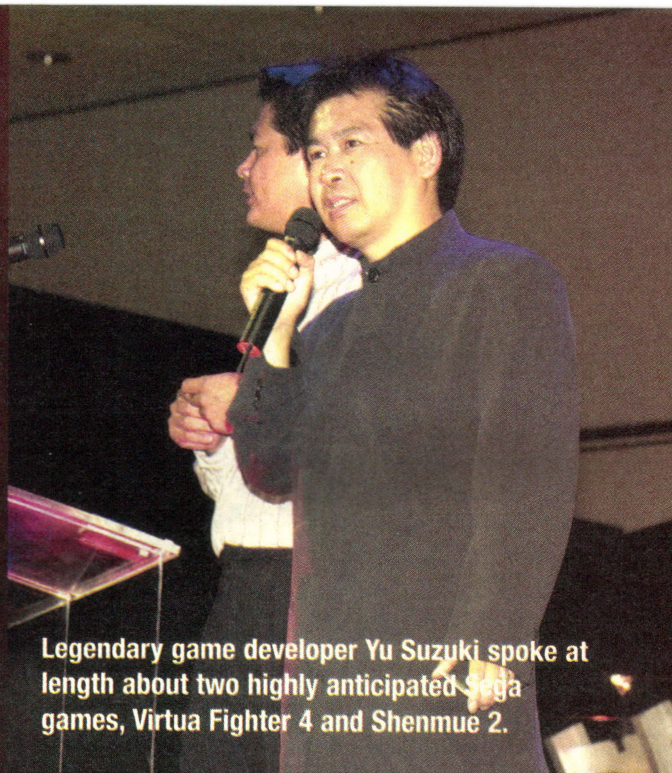
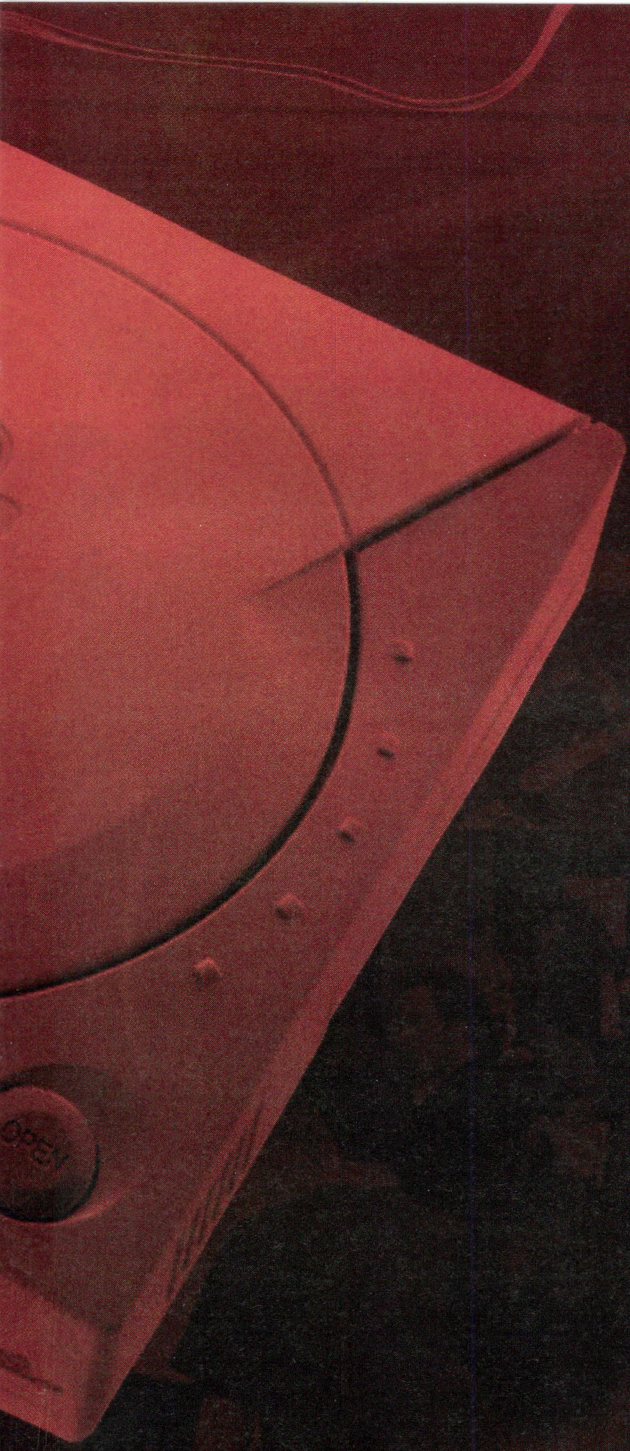
developer, Bizarre Creations, is at it again with MSR's spiritual successor, *Project Gotham Racing*, an exclusive title for the Xbox. Expect stunning graphics, the addition of New York courses to those of Tokyo, London and San Francisco, and more forgiving controls and gameplay.



Sega



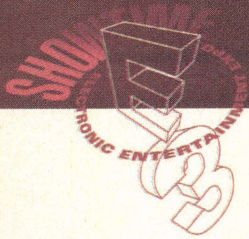
Sonic creator Yuji Naka was on-hand to help celebrate the hedgehog's 10-year anniversary.



Legendary game developer Yu Suzuki spoke at length about two highly anticipated Sega games, Virtua Fighter 4 and Shenmue 2.

By Christian Nutt

Sega's booth was totally different than the rest of the big guys at the show. Unlike Nintendo, Sony, and Microsoft, Sega isn't really pushing their hardware platform anymore. Looking around the show for Dreamcast games was a fruitless task, in fact, since most publishers were eschewing it in favor of newer, shinier toys. Unless you had an invite to Sega's private booth, Dreamcast was clearly done with. Nevertheless, a huge ring of people were glued to Sega's presentation on the large flatscreen TVs that littered the show floor. The lengthy video was filled with a mixture of games and platforms showcasing Sega's new direction.

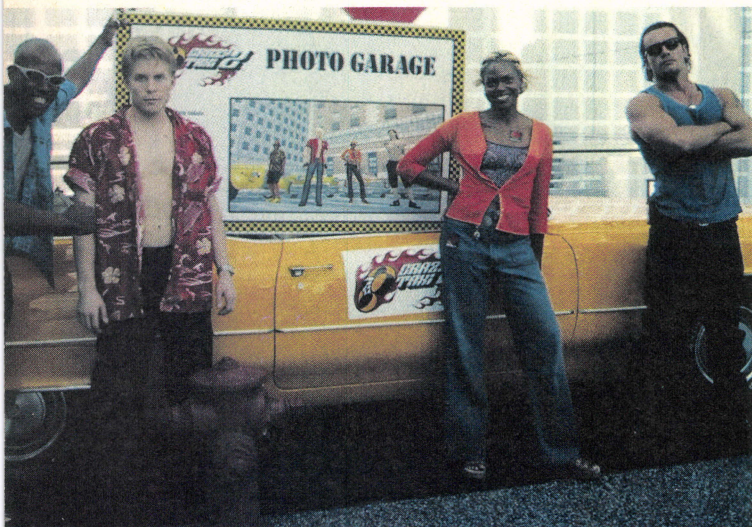


Those lucky enough to be invited in by Sega (and it wasn't easy), the inside of the booth showed that the company was truly aiming to be the number one third-party developer. Sega is totally committed to developing for all platforms; GBA, Gamecube, PS2 and Xbox were represented.

The inside of the booth was very subdued compared to the show floor; Sega's provided a perfect place to try out games, scope out the Xbox and Gamecube controllers, and relax. Sofas, snacks, and subdued lighting were a sharp contrast to the obnoxious noises and flashing lights that pervaded the rest of the show.

With a number of excellent games for competing platforms already playable, Sega didn't need to be showy. This year of transition from Dreamcast to inevitable third-party success meant that Sega wasn't able to bring their larger-than-life antics of last year's show (like Space Channel 5 dancers) to the E3 floor, but they brought what counts most: their amazing games.

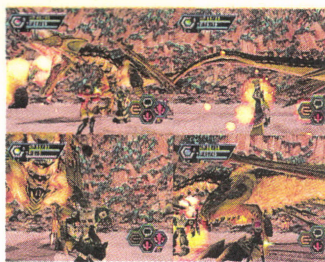
Sega



Show attendees were free to pose for a "Crazy" photo opportunity.

Key Sega Titles

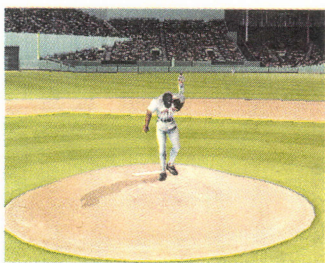
Phantasy Star Online



The number one killer app in the Sega booth was Phantasy Star Online for Gamecube. It was amazing to see that the legendary Yuji Naka, creator of Sonic the Hedgehog, already had his latest hit up and running on Nintendo's newest platform at its

worldwide unveiling. PSO for GC can be played split screen by four players. Online play is also expected.

World Series Baseball 2K1



Dreamcast baseball fans still reeling from World Series Baseball 2K1 need no longer worry. Sega's development champions, Visual Concepts, have struck back with a brand new edition for 2002. WSB 2K2 swaps the arcade-style gameplay that held

back the original for the deep and involved baseball game you've been craving. Additionally, the game features network play over SegaNet.

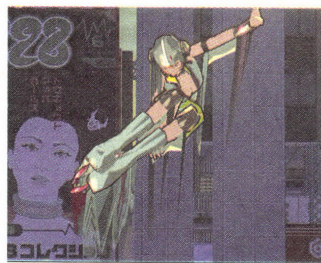
Sonic the Hedgehog Advance



Sonic the Hedgehog Advance is already shining as one of the platform's standout titles. The game was reminiscent of an extremely enhanced version of the Genesis classic, and featured beautiful 2D graphics and speedy gameplay. Fans of the original

series won't be disappointed, while newcomers looking forward to some platforming action for the GBA can't go wrong.

Jet Set Radio Future



Jet Set Radio Future, the sequel to Jet Grind Radio, showcased what a talented developer can do with the Xbox. The game's cartoon-style "cel-shaded" graphics have been given a kick in the pants thanks to the power of Microsoft's new machine.

The environments whizzed by as Beat and Gum slid through the streets of a futuristic Tokyo-to. The game's trademark flair was truly in effect, and there was no shortage of style in Sega's booth thanks to JSRF.

Other Sega Games to Watch

Advanced Columns

Game Gear fans will remember how fun Columns – Sega's answer to Tetris – was on the go. Now it's on the GBA.

Chu Chu Rocket

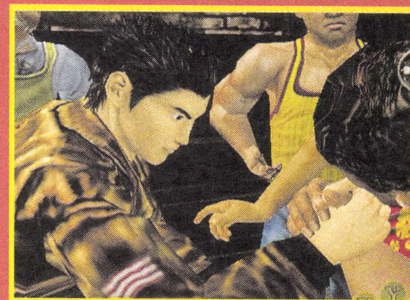
The GBA Chu Chu retains the four player battles that made the Dreamcast version such an addictive hit.

Gun Valkyrie

Gun Valkyrie on the Xbox was immediately noticeable. Reminiscent of the MDK series, the player jets around large cavernous alien lairs, shooting up enemies.

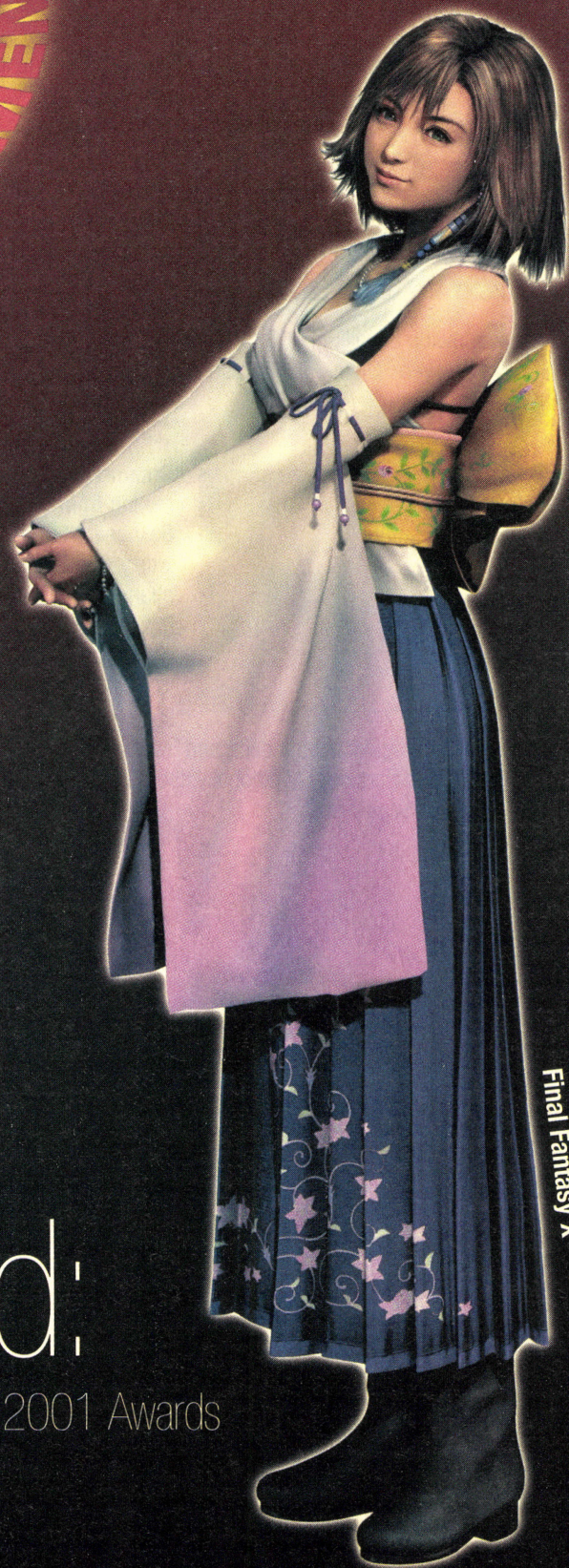
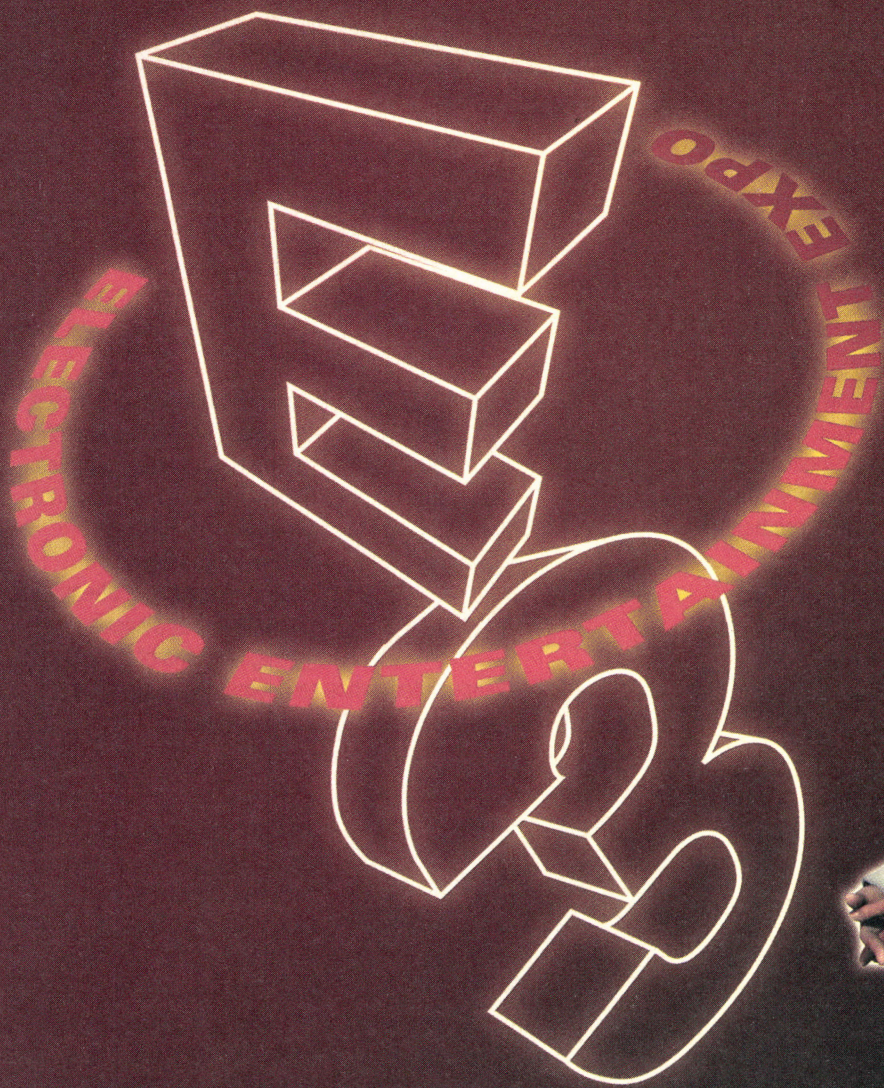
K-Project (working title)

The Dreamcast's K-Project, the newest game from United Game Artists (the people behind Space Channel 5) is an intriguing mix of shooting and music action.



Shenmue II

Shenmue II furthers the story of Ryo Hazuki, and its lush representation of China should be enthralling to fans on the Dreamcast.



Final Fantasy X

The Good, the Bad and the Just Plain Weird:

Video Game Review's Unofficial, Highly Biased E³ 2001 Awards

After several days of arguing, name calling and hair pulling, we finally came up with a list of the best and worst stuff at E³. Here it is:

Best System of Show: PlayStation 2

Nintendo's GameCube may have made the biggest splash, but Sony's PlayStation 2 had the most good games.

Best Game of Show: Final Fantasy X

Gran Turismo 3, Metal Gear Solid 2 and the surprising Devil May Cry (all PlayStation 2 games) gave the latest FF installment a run for its money, but in the end Titus and friends prevailed.

Best PS One Game: Dragon Warrior VII

The pickin's were really slim here.

Best GameCube Game: Star Wars Rogue Leader II

Luigi's Mansion and Pikmin both deserve honorable mentions.

Best Game Boy Advance Game: Game Boy Advance Wars

We had to have at least one controversial pick, right?

Best Xbox Game: Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee

Halo looked sharp too, but the frame rate really needs work.

Best Dreamcast Game: Shenmue 2

We weren't too thrilled about this one until Yu Suzuki demonstrated it at the Sega press conference. Oh, baby!

Best Peripheral of Show: Logitech's force-feedback GT3 wheel

Biggest Disappointment: Xbox

Bill's box shows promise, but, much like PlayStation 2, the initial software offerings fail to excite.

Biggest No-show: Argonaut's Malice for Xbox

Best Booth Babes: Infogrames

After three days of pleading, the woman in the cop outfit still refused to frisk us. Maybe next year...

Worst Booth Babes: Vivendi's Johnny Drama Girls

What was up with those Frank Lloyd Wright hairdos?



Earliest Mascot: Nintendo's Animatronic Mario

The thing's eyes followed you like the Mona Lisa's.

Most Oversaturated Genre: Extreme Sports

Best Celebrity Sighting: Steven Segal at Capcom's booth

Worst Celebrity Sighting: The Mormon chick from Mtv's The Real World: New Orleans making out with some guy.

Biggest announcement: Capcom on Xbox

Most Socially Irresponsible: Take 2 Interactive's State of Emergency — A game that rewards you for causing the most violence during a riot? Paging Sen. Lieberman...

Game Shown in Video Form Only We Most Wanted To Play: Metroid Prime

Most Ridiculously Long Line:

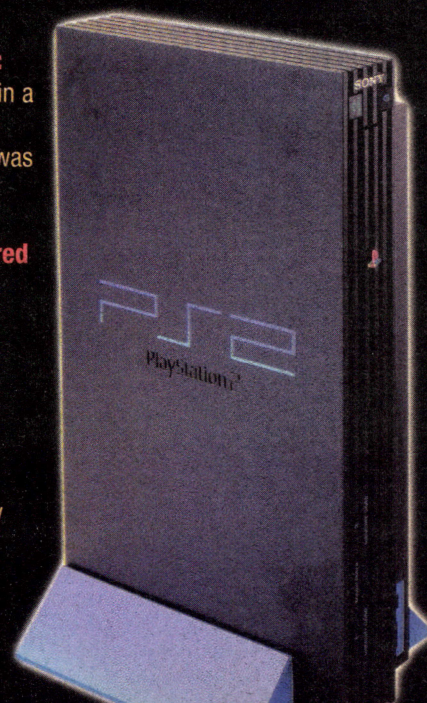
The one you had to wait in to win a Game Boy Advance. "I waited in line for two hours, and all I got was this squishy GameCube?!"

Exhibit Hall We Never Bothered to Visit: Concourse Hall

Best Booth: Nintendo

Worst Booth: 3DO
No booth is worse than bad!

Booth Most Frequented: Sony



Twisted Metal: Black

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Publisher: Sony

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ System: PS2

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Available: Now

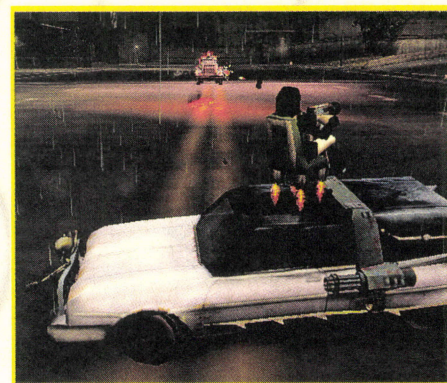


The classic car combat series is back with a darker and more twisted vision. Twisted Metal: Black brings back the developer of the series' first two titles. Critics claim that the last two PlayStation Twisted Metal games got away from the series' focus. That complaint is being addressed as the series is revitalized and reformed by its originators.

The darkness encroaches. All is in readiness. Climb into your battle car and scope out your enemy. Take him down. This is Twisted Metal: Black. The latest in the popular series of car combat simulations has even more atmosphere, more beautifully twisted graphics, and more punch than any seen ever before. With Twisted Metal: Black, there's absolutely nothing that can stand in your way. Guns, cars and glory. These are all yours, when you grab your PS2 pad and get ready for some vehicular manslaughter.

As before, you'll pilot your vehicle of choice through dark and mysterious battlefields, vanquishing friends in the name of ultimate glory. The game's more mature tone

is inspired by films such as *Seven* and *The Silence of the Lambs*. It takes full advantage of the PS2's graphical muscle with impressive effects and detail. Its levels are fully interactive, and if you're not careful the background might make mincemeat of you.



The world of vehicular combat just got darker, and that black box in front of your television just a mite more menacing. Want to take on friends? Grab your pal, his PS2 and TV, iLink cable and get ready for a true network gaming experience. Welcome back to the world of Twisted Metal. There's nothing you can do to escape the darkness. ■

Crazy Taxi

○ ○ ○ ○ Publisher: Acclaim
 ○ ○ ○ ○ System: PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ Available: Now



Dreamcast fans have known for a good long while that you simply can't beat Crazy Taxi. When it comes to fun, flair and an amazing time to be had playing games till your hands hurt, Crazy Taxi can't be topped. It's not exactly clear exactly where the magic comes from, because when you examine the premise, you'll find it's pretty basic: pick up people and drop them off. Collect money. Repeat. But the amazing gameplay and hilarious world of Crazy Taxi keeps it fresh and exciting long after other, "deeper" games have become stale.

You'll be ferrying fares from one stop to another until your timer runs out. The inclusion of two expansive city maps full of curves, twists, nooks and crannies keeps the action surprising for a long time. If you get tired of the arcade mode, you can



bust out the "Crazy Box," a series of uniquely themed minigames that teach you to play better as well as providing a welcome diversion from the main game.

Truly, Acclaim has teamed up with Sega to bring one of the best games in years to the PS2 in tip-top shape. ■

The Adventures of Cookie & Cream

○ ○ ○ ○ Publisher: Agetec
 ○ ○ ○ ○ System: PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ Available: Now



The PlayStation 2 game library is a fairly serious place, full of realistic sports games, exacting driving simulators and gripping fantasy titles. The Adventures of Cookie & Cream is none of those things. It's a zany puzzle game starring a rabbit with a flowerpot on his head. This bizarre title melds Crash Bandicoot-variety action/platforming with brain-tingling puzzle gameplay.

In the one-player game, you must control both Cookie and Cream as they cooperate to disarm traps and avoid obstacles. You can invite a friend to join in the fun, but be warned — you have to share one controller at the same time! ■

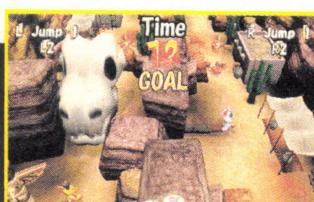
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy

○ ○ ○ ○ Publisher: Midway
 ○ ○ ○ ○ System: PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ Available: Now



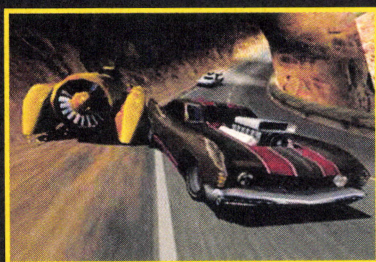
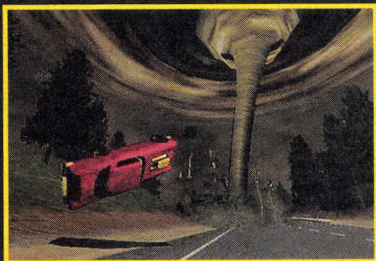
If you're in the mood to bust up the heads of some fantasy enemies with a few of your friends, Gauntlet: Dark Legacy is right up your alley. Since the '80s, the Gauntlet series has stood for nonstop hack-and-slash monster destruction. While Midway constantly improves upon this formula (this is the 21st century), the core idea remains the same. You'll guide your character through 3-D levels, accompanied by your pals if you have 'em, and slay as many beasts as you can lay sword, magic or bow to.

This edition of the series adds fighting game-style combo action and a bevy of new character classes to the mix, but the game is still basically the same as it ever was. ■



Rumble Racing

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Electronic Arts
 ○○○○○ **System:** PS2
 ○○○○○ **Available:** Now



This wacky racer is secretly the sequel to NASCAR Rumble, a hit title for the original PlayStation. Surprisingly, this year's model is even better, despite losing that valuable NASCAR license. The developers have truly let their imaginations run wild with the car designs, track layouts and innovative trick system.

Performing Tony Hawk-style tricks with a car may seem kind of strange, but Rumble Racing executes this auto trickery with finesse. Successfully landing a trick gives your car a serious boost of speed. If you want to compete in the harder circuits, you'll have to master the art of whipping out the mad tricks. Wild spins, unbelievable wheelies and absurd disregard for gravitational laws are commonplace here, and it's cool.

This sequel also features a newly



balanced power-up system and tweaked computer AI. In the first game, drivers near the back of the pack automatically received the best power-ups. In Rumble Racing, the allotment of killer weapons is more evenly balanced. Your computer-controlled racing opponents are also much more aggressive.

With slick graphics, tight control and a fat fun factor, Rumble Racing leads the pack of lighthearted PlayStation 2 racing titles. ■

Winback

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Koei
 ○○○○○ **Players:** PS2
 ○○○○○ **Availability:** Now



Although software publisher Koei is usually known for its yawn-inducing historical war simulations, Winback proves that it can also deliver a thrilling action/adventure.

Winback first appeared on the N64 a few years ago, but this PS2 version has received a graphical facelift, trading in the N64's blurry textures and lackluster characters for 128-bit grandeur.

The plot, however, remains the same: French superspy Jean-Luc Cougar sneaks around blasting baddies and saving the free world. The game plays a lot like Syphon Filter, with a touch of GoldenEye 007 tossed in as a chaser. ■

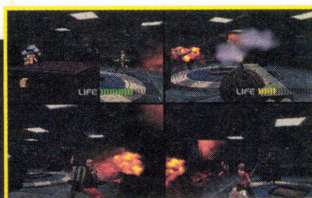
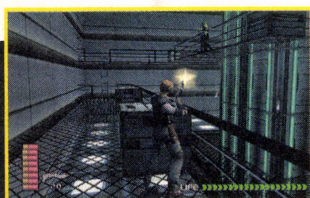
18 Wheeler: American Pro Trucker

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Acclaim
 ○○○○○ **System:** PS2
 ○○○○○ **Available:** August



Drive the big rigs across our great land of America in this PS2 port of Sega's arcade hit. Overland transport can get pretty extreme on these mean highways, since you must contend with an ever-present time limit, rival trucks and clueless motorists in their puny cars. You've got more than 10,000 miles of highway to cover and skillful driving will earn some hefty monetary bonuses along the way.

The overall sensation is something like Crazy Taxi in a 60-foot truck carrying 20 tons of cargo. These trucks can't exactly spin out like a cab, but at least you'll see some nice scenery along the way. Thrill to the freedom of the open road! ■



Red Faction

○○○○○ Publisher: THQ
 ○○○○○ System: PS2
 ○○○○○ Availability: Now

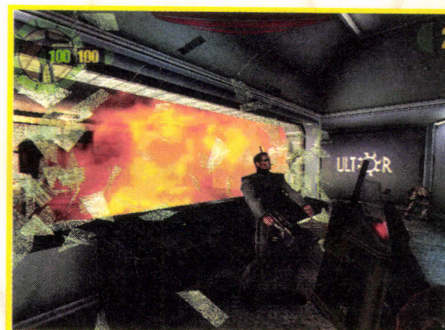


The developers of Summoner are back, but instead of bringing you another Action RPG they've seen fit to change everyone's expectations for first-person shooters.

Like many games in the genre, Red Faction is a plot-heavy adventure. Developer Volition weaves a tale (as many do) of a dystopian future filled with menacing corporations. This time you're up against the dreaded Ultor Corporation, as Parker, an enigmatic, charismatic and intelligent cog struggling to get out of the machine.

What they have done that's completely original (and may prove to be the most important change to the way FPS games are played) is that you can destroy any part of the background with your weapons.

We're not talking about cheesy



little holes blown in walls either — every wall, every surface, every room can be realistically destroyed.

You even have an infrared gauge that shows you the location of enemies behind obstructions, allowing you to take out your opponents without ever seeing their faces.

Innovation has come to the FPS genre. Red Faction may well change the way we think about first-person shooters forever. ■

MX 2002 featuring

Ricky Carmichael

○○○○○ Publisher: THQ
 ○○○○○ System: PS2
 ○○○○○ Available: Now



The billowing cloud of dust has settled in the motocross game arena, and Ricky Carmichael's franchise looks to be the new king. THQ's PlayStation 2 offering features smooth visuals, tight control, crazy tricks and extensive customizability. You'll find 28 real-life professional bikers, 20 licensed tracks and 16 different bikes. Bikes now feature realistic shocks, so you'll have a better feel for the courses as you race at breakneck speeds.

Traditional racing is fun, but the real excitement happens when you bust out the extreme tricks. If you've played Tony Hawk, you'll feel right at home with the similar trick system of MX 2002. ■



NASCAR

Heat 2001

○○○○○ Publisher: Infogrames
 ○○○○○ System: PS2
 ○○○○○ Availability: Now



If you've been waiting for an amazing sim of NASCAR racing and last year's offering by EA wasn't enough, this is the racer for you. Infogrames kicks up the simulation, graphics and control a notch, and delivers what might be the ultimate version of the NASCAR vision. You'll be able to choose from 26 drivers and 19 authentic Winston Cup tracks, all of which are adorned with the official art of NASCAR, down to the cars and stadiums.

The 2001 season is perfectly replicated — the utmost in realism is yours. The game offers different modes for different skill levels; newbies can keep it simple, while Expert Driver offers all of the difficulty of a real NASCAR race. Add in a two-player mode and you're ready to race! ■



MTV Music Generator 2

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Codemasters

○○○○○ **System:** PS2

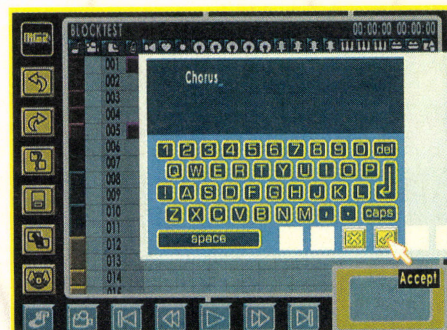
○○○○○ **Available:** Now



Grab your candy bracelet and snag some glowsticks, because Codemasters is transforming your PlayStation 2 into a miniature rave with this do-it-yourself techno creator!

Expanding on the basics introduced in its PS One predecessor, this program lets you create your own phat dance tracks. The PlayStation 2's beefy audio power allows for crystal-clear sounds. You choose beats, melodies and riffs from a massive library of provided samples. Plus, you can import your own samples from any music CD for further customization. Your N*Sync mix will blow them away!

Both the audio and video portions have been substantially upgraded, and you can now edit together a stylish video for your final musical masterpiece. The four-player Music



Jam also returns, allowing you and three friends to band together for a crazy jam session. Even though you're just mashing buttons on a Dual Shock, it's a lot like being in some crazy jam session with your favorite recording artist.

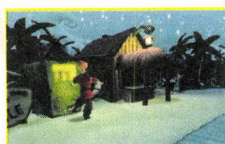
If you're on the market for something a little different for your PS2, check out this unique title. While it's not exactly a game by traditional standards, it does offer you a chance to express yourself as an artist. ■

Escape from Monkey Island

○○○○○ **Publisher:** LucasArts

○○○○○ **System:** PS2

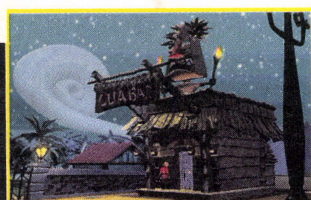
○○○○○ **Available:** Now



LucasArts brings its long-running PC series to the PlayStation 2 with this sidesplitting pirate adventure. For the first time in the series, all the graphics are real-time polygons, not just 2-D backgrounds.

The visuals might have been revamped, but the traditional gameplay system remains basically intact. Pointing and clicking is the method of interaction here, along with selecting the dialog that you'd like your hero to speak.

You portray Guybrush Threepwood, an intrepid swashbuckler with a heart of gold. In this adventure, he'll face evil pirates, unscrupulous Australians and lots of mischievous monkeys. ■



Bloody Roar 3

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Activision

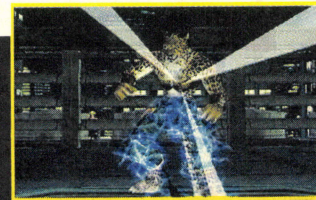
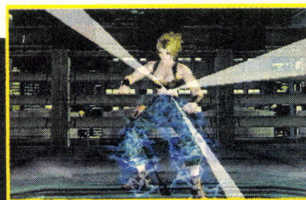
○○○○○ **System:** PS2

○○○○○ **Availability:** Now



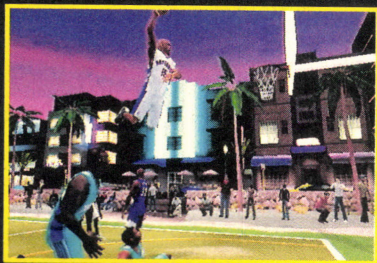
Activision brings the beast-filled action of the Bloody Roar series to the PS2. If you've never played one of these games before, you'll be surprised to hear that not only do your fighters pack a whallop, they're able to transform into bestial versions of themselves that do even more damage. The game includes characters like Long, a Kung Fu badass who can change into a tiger to pound the stuffing out of you.

The game's fast pace will assure that your fighting skills must be at their max to survive! These beast warriors won't let up for a second, and even cuties like Alice the bunny rabbit can pummel you before you notice. Grab a friend and get ready for some beastly beatings! ■



NBA Street

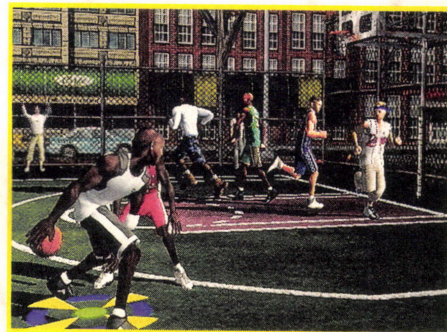
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** EA Big
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** Now



The creators of SSX bring their extreme outlook to basketball in this off-the-wall game of street ball. Although the game features three-on-three action, crazy moves and over-the-top arcade gameplay, this is no mere NBA Jam clone. EA Big has radically altered the game of basketball by introducing an SSX-style trick system into the mix.

By holding down certain button combinations, you can unleash an array of wild maneuvers. All this on-court showboating isn't just for kicks because performing tricks can actually lower your opponent's score.

Since this is not a regulation game, some of the strict NBA rules have been purposefully overlooked. Goaltending is commonplace in this no-holds-barred asphalt arena, and if blocking a shot requires a little



physical contact, odds are it will go unnoticed. The pace of the game is frantic, thanks to a super-speedy shot clock. Flashy dunks, pithy put-downs and killer moves are the status quo in this urban hoopsfest.

EA Big injected a major dose of fun and funkiness into snowboarding with SSX, and it looks like a similar amount of care has been taken with this fabulous basketball romp. Grab your ball and an afro pick and head down to the street! ■

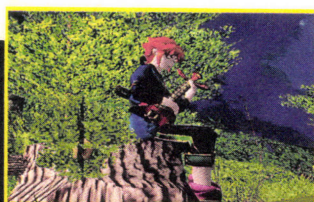
Ephemeral Fantasia

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Konami
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Availability:** July



Konami makes it to the PS2 first with a traditional RPG – ahead of giants like Square, Enix and Sony. Ephemeral Fantasia tells the story of a bard named Mouse (yes, Mouse) who's on a journey to accept a commission to compose a wedding song for a local lord. When he gets there, he learns the princess is not ready for her marriage and that things aren't quite what they seem.

Join her and embark on an adventure through a fully polygonal 3-D land where you'll fight monsters, meet people, play song and enjoy the scenery. As you reach the story's depths, new characters will join you and you'll be able to discover the truth of Ephemeral Fantasia. ■



NCAA Football 2002

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** EA Sports
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** Now



EA Sports failed to bring a college football game to the field last year, but this year it's ready to play. Using the same powerful engine that powered last year's best-selling Madden NFL 2001, NCAA 2002 offers collegiate pigskin excitement in 128-bit style.

Detailed player models, realistically recreated stadiums, genuine fight songs and nubile cheerleaders are just a few of the exacting details in this fun simulation.

College football might not have the million-dollar salaries of the NFL, but it does have pure, unadulterated players who are in for the love of the game! Die-hard sports fans should have a great time with this one, due later this summer. ■

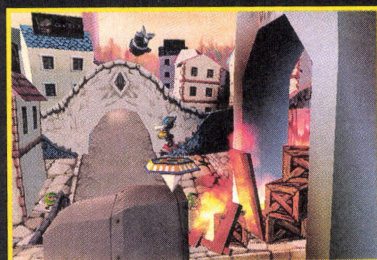
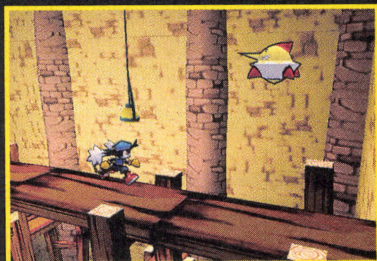


Klonoa 2

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Namco

○○○○○ **System:** PS2

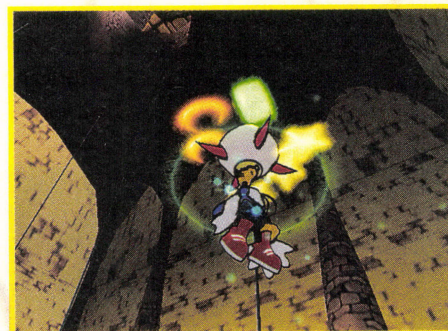
○○○○○ **Availability:** July



Namco's indomitable cat-creature is back for another romp through a candy-colored fantasy land in Klonoa 2: Lunatea's Veil, the sequel to the highly underrated game for the original PlayStation.

If you never got a chance to play Klonoa's first adventure, you missed out on a traditional-style 2-D platformer dressed up in shiny, stylish 3-D graphics. Of course, this is your perfect chance to rectify the situation. Thanks to the PS2, the graphics only got prettier while the gameplay remained tried-and-true. Using the power of a magical ring containing your pal Huepow, you'll explore the whimsical realm capturing enemies and using them to jump 4over obstacles and retrieve items.

The game's theme makes it perfect for younger gamers and girlfriends,



but the challenge should satisfy any tenacious gamer looking for a rewarding experience that harkens back to the best platform games of days past. If you miss the pure pleasure of yesteryear's action games or just want a cute diversion to lighten up your PS2 collection, this is surely the game for you.

Klonoa 2 offers up some of the most refreshing action on the PS2. Don't let the cutness dissuade you — this one's a keeper. ■

Rune:

Viking Warlord

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Rockstar

○○○○○ **System:** PS2

○○○○○ **Availability:** July



Have you ever daydreamed of being a mighty Viking? Ax in one hand, beset by foes, slaying all comers? Well, thanks to Rune, you may get your wish. As the virile Viking Ragnar, you are commanded by Odin to crush the demonic hordes of the evil god Loki as they invade the world. Grab your trusty broadsword and travel across a landscape filled with ghouls and monsters for you to slay.

The environments are lushly detailed, thanks to the power of the PS2, and you'll never run out of enemies to slaughter. If you get bored with the single-player quest, check out the multiplayer mode, where you and some friends can slay the night away with a number of short-range weapons. ■

Giants:

Citizen Kabuto

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Interplay

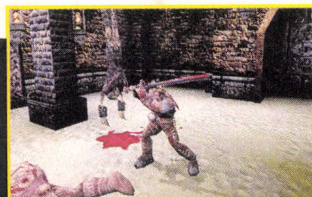
○○○○○ **System:** PS2

○○○○○ **Available:** August



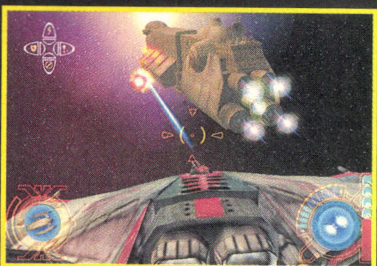
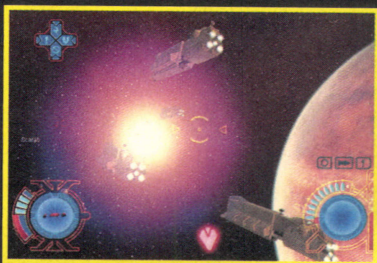
PC gamers welcomed this title with open arms last fall, taking a shine to the colorful graphics, imaginative races and fast-paced gameplay. Take your choice of three wildly different races: Meccs, Delphi or Kabuto. The Meccs are jetpack-wearing, armor-clad humanoid soldiers who use standard weaponry. If you're in the market for something slightly more exotic, get your hands on the Delphi, a race of magical sirens. Finally, you can even control Kabuto, a massive beast capable of inflicting mass destruction by merely walking.

The game features 45 different missions spread across 16 unique islands, so you'll have plenty of time to familiarize yourself with all three races. ■



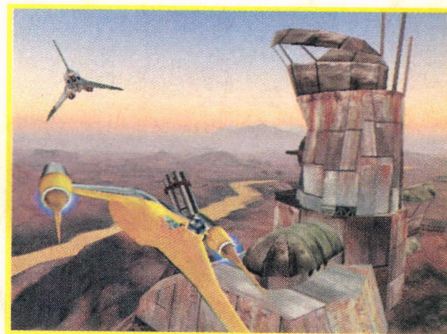
Star Wars Starfighter

○○○○○ **Publisher:** LucasArts
 ○○○○○ **System:** PS2
 ○○○○○ **Availability:** Now



Games based on the *Star Wars* films are usually a hit or miss affair. Titles like *Rogue Squadron* and *Episode I: Racer* are good, memorable examples of licensing done right, but most of the other *Star Wars* games stink like Bantha droppings. Luckily, LucasArts' premiere PlayStation 2 title appears to be one of the good ones.

Taking place concurrently with *The Phantom Menace*, *Starfighter* follows the exploits of three vastly different characters. Rhys Dallows is a brave Naboo pilot who has been separated from his battalion. The sultry Vana Sage is a mercenary attempting to double-cross the greedy Trade Federation. Finally, Nym is a crafty space pirate who yearns to exact vengeance on the Federation for destroying his base. Together, this ragtag cast will help decide the



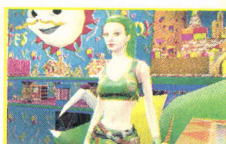
outcome of a colossal conflict.

The gameplay and presentation are very similar to the *Colony Wars* and *Wing Commander* series: intense space combat viewed from a third-person perspective. Some of the levels are interstellar dogfights, but others take place within the atmosphere of 10 different planets.

Beautiful graphics, a classic *Star Wars* soundtrack and tight play control make this a true rarity — a great game based on a movie. ■

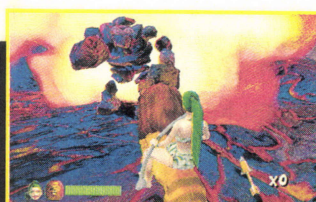
Portal Runner

○○○○○ **Publisher:** 3DO
 ○○○○○ **System:** PS2
 ○○○○○ **Available:** August



The *Army Men* franchise continues to multiply and prosper in this, the fourth *Army Men* game for the PlayStation 2 in six months. Join Vikki Grimm, the buxom babe from past *Army Men* titles, as she sets out to quell Brigitte Blue's scandalous plot to make Sarge her exclusive love slave.

Luckily, Vikki has more than just her girlish charm and tremendous assets as weapons — she has Leo, a ferocious yet friendly lion pal. You can control Vikki and Leo individually, but Vikki can also mount her powerful steed and ride bareback through the wild. *Army Men* fans should totally check out this interesting new direction for the beloved series. ■



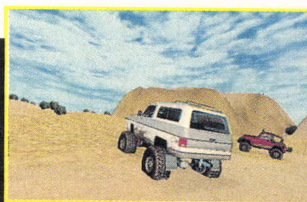
Test Drive Off Road: Wide Open

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Infogrames
 ○○○○○ **System:** PS2
 ○○○○○ **Available:** August



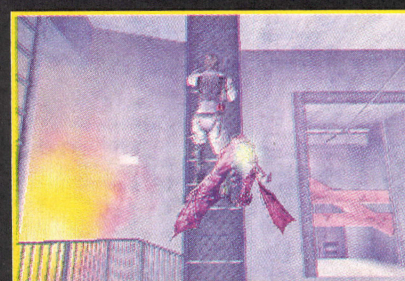
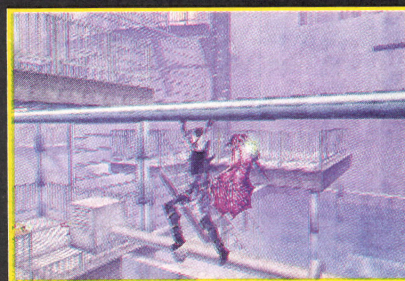
If you liked *Smuggler's Run* chances are you're going to love *Test Drive Off Road: Wide Open*. The people behind that seminal work of the PlayStation 2 launch are back with the most exciting Off Road simulation yet! Grab your truck and dig into the mud. With more than 30 tracks to zoom across, there's no shortage of down-and-dirty action.

You'll blaze a trail through some of the most scenic off-roading locations known to man, such as Yosemite and Hawaii's Big Island. As you carouse through the game's lush environments, the realistic physics will keep the challenge fresh and exciting. Grab your Jeep Wrangler, Ford Bronco — or the ultimate Humvee — and take to the dirt. ■



Extermination

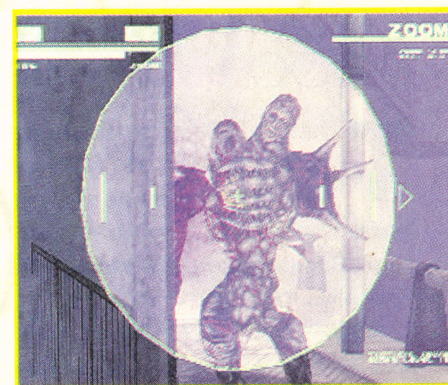
○○○○ **Publisher:** Sony
 ○○○○ **System:** PS2
 ○○○○ **Availability:** July



Extermination follows the exploits of Dennis Riley, a stoic young man with a monumental mission — he must investigate and clean up an Antarctic base swarming with giant mutant insects. The adventure begins on Christmas Eve 2005, as Dennis and his comrades on the “Red Light” reconnaissance team are dispatched to combat the bug infestation. The plane carrying our brave heroes suffers a nasty crash landing, leaving only Dennis and his friend Roger as survivors. Together, these two soldiers must explore the cavernous compound and discover its sinister secret. Let’s see...with Christmas Eve, the South Pole and giant man-eating bugs, we definitely have the recipe for survival horror, holiday-style!

Described by the developers as a “panic action” game, Extermination combines the spine-tingling scares of Resident Evil with more traditional action gameplay like that in Syphon Filter and Metal Gear Solid. This allows you to quickly react to incoming terrors with an acrobatic jump or a hail of gunfire.

One interesting in-game twist is the Infection Meter, a readout that displays just how infested Dennis’ body is by mutant pathogens. As he is bitten by the creepy crawlies, his vision becomes blurry, an oozing sore opens on his back and touching water begins to hurt him.

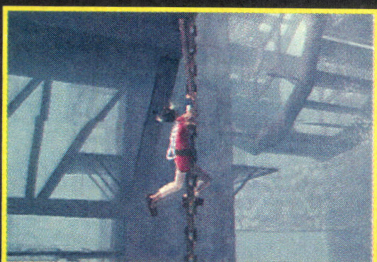


To normalize his condition you must stop at a (perpetually difficult to find) vaccine station.

Luckily, Dennis has the ability to customize his gun as he discovers new parts, so your plain-Jane rifle quickly grows into a laser scoped, silenced behemoth with a flamethrower attachment just for kicks. ■

ICO

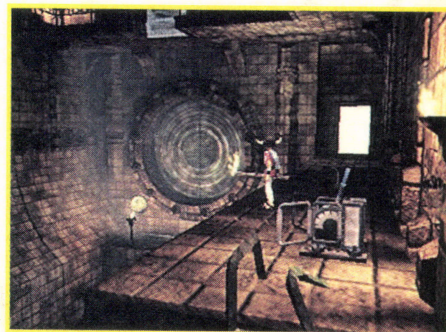
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Sony
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



Tired of the same old extreme sports, racing and fighting titles on your PlayStation 2?

Investigate the baffling world of Ico, a puzzling, esoteric adventure game unlike anything seen before. You assume the role of Ico, a young man born with goat-like horns protruding from his forehead. His medieval peers believe him to be cursed, so they bury him alive within an ancient castle's crypt. However, Ico escapes from his cruel entombment and emerges into the mysterious castle. Before him he sees an exotic woman who also appears to be trapped in this gloomy citadel. Ico and the girl must find their way out.

Countless traps and puzzles await the unlikely duo, and a tragic verbal barrier worsens their flight. Ico and the girl do not speak the same language; attempting to communicate



is harrowing at best. The gameplay mainly consists of solving physical puzzles and navigating labyrinths, while lush visuals and a haunting soundtrack assist in creating the pervasive strangeness. The game actually has a similar style to the mega-selling PC game Myst, but this game has actual gameplay.

Store shelves are choked with rehashes, rip-offs and sequels, so it's refreshing to see an oddball title like Ico make it to market. ■

Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse

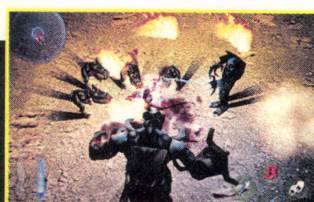
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Metro 3D
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** Now



Dark Angel brings the PS2 a much-needed RPG adventure, a game based on the exploits of a girl called Anna and her life in an adventurous medieval land called Gothos. A humanitarian, Anna desperately seeks the cure of a disease that mutates people into horrible massacre machines.

An interesting blend of full-on action and role playing, Dark Angel also contains a plethora of weapons and piles of gruesome enemies for variety.

This marriage of action RPG elements and dark, gothic horror will cause those of you with a soft spot for the venerable Castlevania series to long for a session with Anna and the inhabitants of Gothos. ■



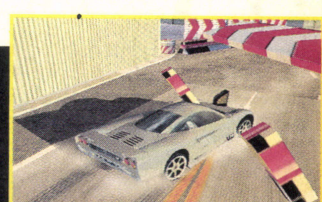
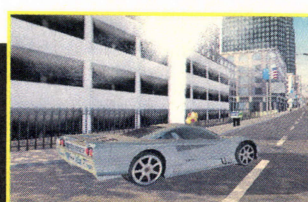
Supercar Street Challenge

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Activision
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Genre:** July



Gearheads are always drooling over the far-out concept cars shown at major auto shows. Tragically, most of these futuristic vehicles never see the light of day on showroom floors, so only a select few ever get a shot at driving them. Supercar Street Challenge changes all that, allowing you to not only drive concept cars, but also to design your very own.

Whether you're in one of the 12 provided cars or one of your own creations, you'll take to the streets of London, Paris, Munich, Los Angeles and Rome for no-holds-barred street-racing action. You can even compete against your friend's tricked-out autos in the game's intense split-screen duel mode. ■



Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec

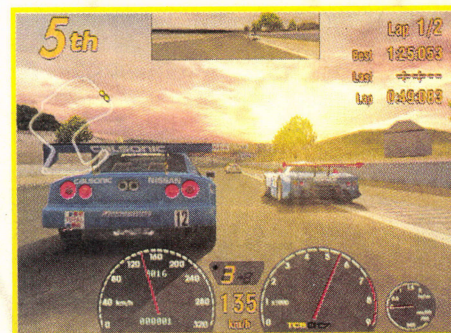
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Sony
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** July



Better late than never, this sequel has the potential to be a true "system-seller," the kind of game that people will buy a console just for the chance to play.

Fans of the previous two titles know exactly what to expect from GT3: incredibly realistic racing gameplay, a massive collection of real-life cars and those infuriating license tests. All those classic aspects return, augmented by amazing 128-bit graphics that truly show off the raw power of the PlayStation 2. Effects like blazing sunbeams, volumetric fog, shimmering heat waves, swirling dust clouds and realistic rain enhance the graphical realism.

Fifteen impressive stages mimic real-world locations perfectly. But the real stars of the visual show are the actual cars. More than 150



American, European and Japanese sports cars can be attained, with over 30 of them new to the series. True gearheads can tweak the minute details of the vehicles and compete in the Simulation Mode, but racing lightweights looking for a good time will enjoy the less complex Arcade Mode.

GT3 also features a two-player versus mode and support for up to six simultaneous players using the I-link cable. ■

Half-Life

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Sierra
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



PC gamers have been in love with this acclaimed first-person shooter for years, and now console players can get a taste of the magic. Half-Life achieved its legendary status by successfully combining a compelling storyline with frantic shooting splendor.

This PlayStation 2 version has some great new features, like higher polygon counts and new visual effects that blow away the graphics of the dated PC version.

Another big addition is a two-player split-screen mode. You and a pal can frag one another in a death match or cooperate in an all-new joint mission.

Enter the doomed Black Mesa facility and find out what all the fuss is about! ■

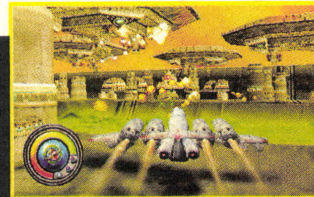
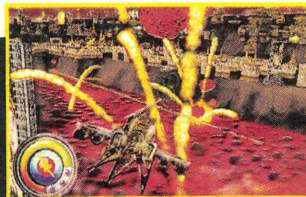
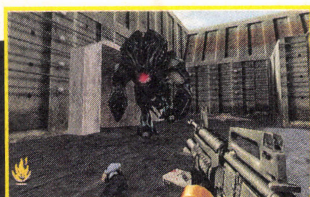
World Destruction League: WarJetz

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** 3DO
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** Now



If you've ever longed for a frenetic dogfight in the blue skies of death, this is the game for you. In the near future, the world has been nearly destroyed in a nuclear holocaust. But don't let that stop you from adding to the carnage.

A twisted game show has called upon the best and most talented pilots to compete for fame and glory on the airwaves. Now it's your turn to lay your hands on one of these souped-up death machines and take to the skies. Tear across the skies and unload your ammunition on rival flyboys. You can even unleash the fearsome MegaNuke for maximum destructive power. Nothing can stop the WarJetz from storming the skies. ■



Tokyo Xtreme Racer

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Crave
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Availability:** Now



If you're not familiar with the Dreamcast TXR games, prepare for a racing experience unlike any you've known before. Tokyo Xtreme Racer represents the world of dark city highways overrun by gangs in modified cars, cruising for just one more race. You'll have to prowl the city streets looking for opponents.

Each race is completed when an opponent's SP drains. These points, not unlike the health meter in a fighting game, are sapped when you outdistance him.

Once you beat some thugs and save up a little cash, you can buy modifications for your car. Whether they're technical or visual is up to you. Anything from fine-tuned engines to ridiculous spoilers are at your disposal.

New to TXR0 is the ability to play a two-player game. Take your



souped-up rod out against a friend and zoom through miles and miles of authentic Tokyo highways lit only by the glare of headlights.

TXR0 is the most atmospheric, competitive and engaging racer you're likely to play. Once you've defeated enough gang leaders you can proclaim yourself king of the Tokyo streets.

The slick graphics, lengthy roads and huge selection of cars will get your juices flowing. ■

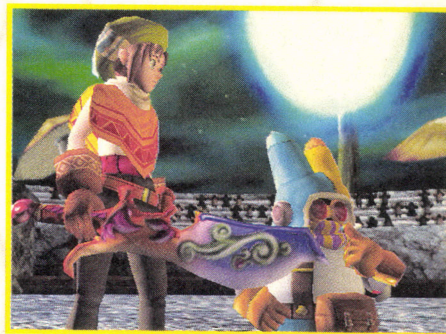
Dark Cloud

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Sony
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** Now



Described by some as a "Zelda killer" and as a "Populous Wannabe" by others, Dark Cloud is Sony's first major first-party RPG offering for the PlayStation 2. In fact, it does borrow elements from both Zelda and Populous, offering hack 'n' slash action scenes and world-building simulation sections. After rescuing townspeople by defeating dungeons, you then use the "Georama System" to help them rebuild their demolished homeland. These construction interludes provide a fresh change of pace from the dungeon spelunking.

The game's action-oriented labyrinths are straight out of Zelda, featuring lock-on targeting, swordplay and various secondary weapons. However, the dungeons are actually randomly generated, giving opportunities for replay.

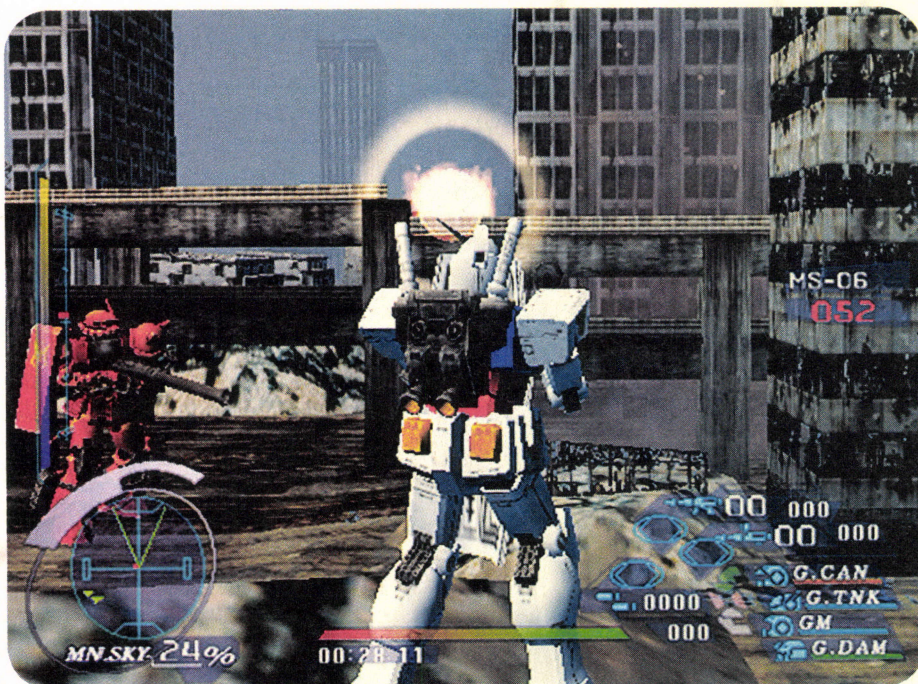
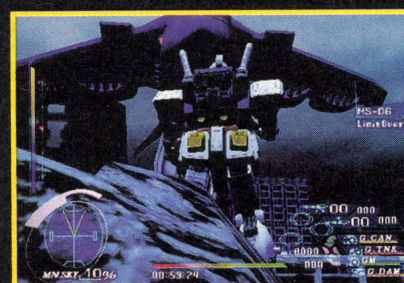
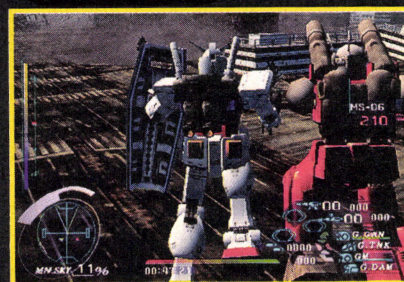
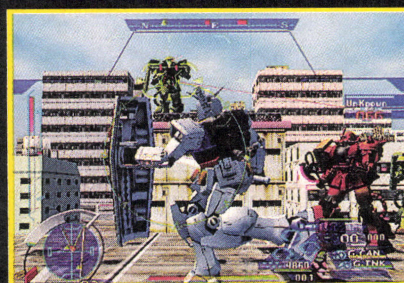
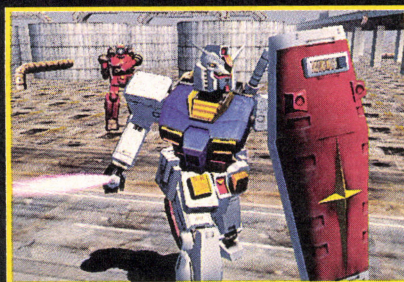
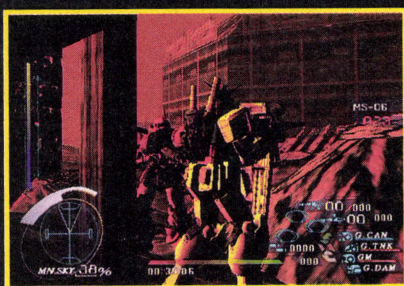


Graphically, Dark Cloud is a cut above the crowd. Anime-style characters charm the screen with emotion and lush environments have a photo-realistic sheen. A sweeping, epic soundtrack provides a needed backbone to this fantastic tale.

So far, the PS2 RPG crop has been a barren one, with downers like Evergrace, Eternal Ring and Summoner disappointing gamers. Will Dark Cloud have a silver lining for RPG fans? ■

Mobile Suit Gundam: Journey to Jaburo

○○○○ Publisher: Bandai
 ○○○○ System: PS2
 ○○○○ Available: July



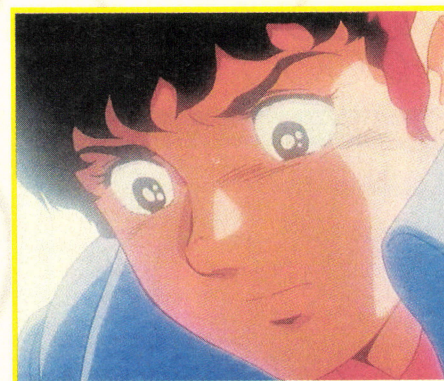
When the Zeon forces attack Side 7, the colony where young Amuro Ray is studying civil engineering, he dawdles in his journey to the shelter. As he leaves his home late, he spies the Zaku mobile suits attacking the defenseless colonists – what are they after? Shortly thereafter, he discovers their target: the Mobile Suit Gundam RX-78, a prototype mech that's more than a match for the invaders. After studying the operational manual briefly, he suits up, and a new legend is born.

The popular Mobile Suit Gundam series blasts onto the PS2 with this, the first game to be released in the U.S. chronicling the original saga of the anime. Gundam fans have heard tales of Amuro Ray, Char Aznable and the One Year War, but this is the first game that lets you take direct action in the battle against the famous Zeon pilot.

As Amuro, you'll have to fight Zakus and other Zeon mobile suits across Earth and space. As the game progresses, detailed, animated cutscenes tell the tale of our hero and his desperate battle

against Char.

The tragedy of the One Year War unfolds before your eyes in full, polygonal 3-D glory. With Beam Saber and Beam Rifle at the ready, your chance to relive the most harrowing and dramatic moments of the classic anime series, currently



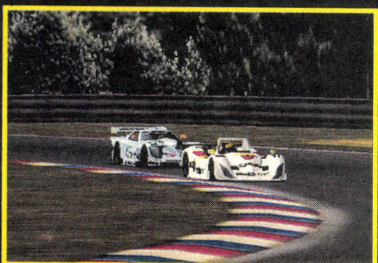
being released in the U.S. for the first time since its original Japanese broadcast in 1979, has come.

The power of the Gundam, the power of the Newtype — they are yours.

Aspiring Mobile Suit pilots and fans of the best in mech action will enjoy this retelling of a classic animated tale. ■

Le Mans 24 Hours

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Infogrames Inc.
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Availability:** August



Infogrames brings the critically acclaimed Dreamcast racer to the PlayStation 2 with its attention to detail and amazing gameplay in tow. The game might have been overlooked in its previous incarnation, but serious PS2 race fans owe it to themselves to check out this revamped edition.

Those of you who aren't familiar with the actual Le Mans race may be surprised to hear that it's a 24-hour long event held each year in France. This game allows you to simulate that race perfectly (yes, you can play for 24 hours straight, if you wish!) and is also home to more traditional game modes.

Depending on the difficulty selection you choose, your car will handle differently. If you're up to the task, Le Mans 24 Hours has complex, realistic physics for you to master.



Ever wanted to race on real tracks throughout the world? This is your chance. Every facet of detail of the Le Mans race has been faithfully represented, with licensed cars and beautifully detailed graphics. Play against friends, enjoy arcade mode, or launch a championship career.

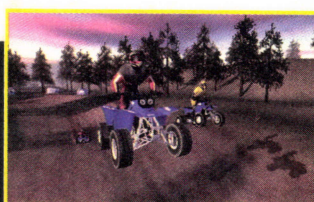
Infogrames has provided an excellent simulation of one of the most unique and challenging races in professional driving. ■

ATV Offroad Fury

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** SCEA
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** Now



Ah, the hallmark high-pitched whine, the hard ruts and hip-separating accidents of off-road racing. And although the mud 'n' knobby tire video-game genre reached the saturation point last year with BMX, Moto, Super and SnoCross games popping up like acne on a KFC employee's face, this game promises a unique ATV experience. As the first game to feature licensed ATVs from Kawasaki, Honda and Yamaha, amazing graphics, over 20 gigantic courses, freestyle and head-to-head racing, our engines are revved. Tweak-freaks can customize tire friction, shocks, steering and braking, too. Not enough authenticity for you? Have a friend throw dirt in your face while you play, Xtreme Boy. ■



Ring of Red

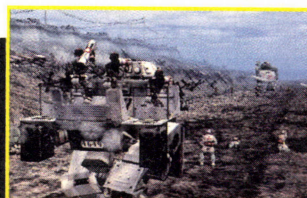
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Konami
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** Now



Finally, a game that asks the burning question: What would have happened if civil war — fought with giant, gas powered mechs — had broken out in World War II-era Japan?

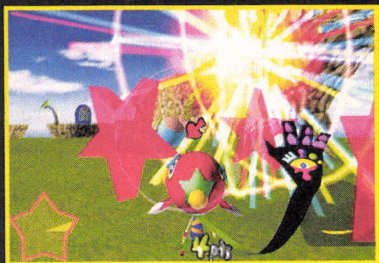
In Ring of Red, players command squads composed of foot soldiers and eight unique Armored Fighter Walkers. Most of the game takes place on grid-based maps. Encounter the enemy, however, and you'll be yanked into battle, where you have to manually control your units.

The story unfolds over 20 scenarios, filled with political and ideological intrigue. What's more, the game combines historical WWII footage with computer-rendered animation, giving it a novel yet believable look. ■



Stretch Panic

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Conspiracy
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



This oddball title comes to us from Treasure, a small Japanese development team with a devoted fan base on both sides of the Pacific. You can see their work in classic titles like Contra III, Gunstar Heroes, Radiant Silvergun and Guardian Heroes. However, for every winner in their roster there is also a totally screwy game that flopped, like Dynamite Headdy, Silhouette Mirage and McDonald's Treasureland Adventure.

Weird storylines are status quo for Treasure, and Stretch Panic doesn't disappoint in this category. You play Linda, a pale waif of a girl who wears a possessed scarf. You see, a demon meant to possess Linda but her scarf got in the way. Linda's 12 sisters aren't as lucky and succumb to the demonic influence.

It's up to Linda to save her sisters

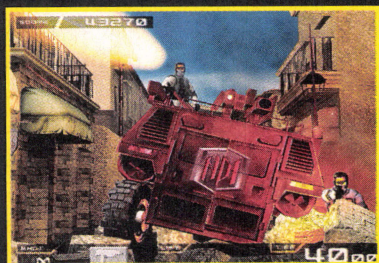


and her newly satanic scarf turns out to be pretty useful. Her hand-like fashion accessory can pick up and stretch just about anything in her way. You use the scarf to pick up objects, stretch enemies and climb to new areas.

So, is Stretch Panic an action classic or an obscure throwaway? Well, it's full of fresh ideas, zany visuals and undeniable charm, yet it will probably have many players scratching their heads in confusion. ■

Time Crisis 2

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Namco
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** PS2
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



Amazingly, this 1998 arcade smash has never made it to a home console until now. (Namco's recent Time Crisis: Project Titan for PS One is an original game.) At long last, an arcade-perfect version is coming to the PlayStation 2 with all of thrilling features intact.

Similar to Sega's popular Virtua Cop series, Time Crisis places you in the role of a secret agent on a mission to defeat villainous terrorists. Namco's unique twist on the classic shooting game is the ability to duck, adding a strategic defensive maneuver to the standard shootout gameplay.

Namco will release the game with the new GunCon 2, a redesigned version of its highly accurate PS One light gun.

Perhaps the best news about this port is that it will support the two-



player mode found in the arcade version. A simple split-screen option is a nice addition, but hardcore fans can use the I-link for dual-monitor action! Sure, you'll need two TVs, two PS2s and two copies of the game, but it will be the ultimate Time Crisis setup.

Time Crisis 2, with its innovative setup and hair-raising gameplay, should satisfy armchair jockeys who have been jonesing for a really good shootout. ■

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Eidos Interactive

○○○○○ **System:** PS2

○○○○○ **Availability:** Now



The end of Soul Reaver: Legacy of Kain was abrupt, to say the least. Credible sources on the web mention unused data on the CD, depicting a game that met its end before its developers intended. Soul Reaver 2 handily remedies that.

Soul sucker Raziel is back, and Kain must be punished for the horrors he's visited on Nosgoth. This time, you'll have many more powers and Reavers — mystic swords such as the first game's Soul Reaver — at your disposal. You'll travel through time, into the history of the realm, trying to right wrongs and silence the black-hearted Kain before his evil can spread.

Besides an expanded story, improved graphics and more weapons and spells, you can expect a greater variety of puzzles — in other words, no more endless, dull



switch flipping and box pushing.

Of course, the moody, decrepit and demonic denizens of Nosgoth return, with more intrigue and malevolence of the first game.

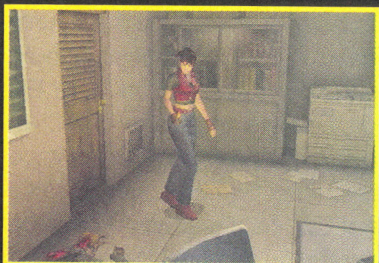
Soul Reaver 2 surpasses its predecessor in every way, offering a richer, fuller game. Adventure fans looking for an atmospheric quest will not be disappointed with this journey into a world of the undead. ■

Resident Evil CODE: Veronica X

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Capcom

○○○○○ **System:** PS2

○○○○○ **Available:** August



Capcom's Dreamcast survival horror masterpiece lurches onto the PlayStation 2 in this newly enhanced version. CODE: Veronica X follows the exploits of Claire and Chris Redfield, the zombie-blasting siblings who each saw some action in other Resident Evil games. The undead menace has spread beyond Raccoon City, so the heroes go to Europe and Antarctica to stop the evil Umbrella Corporation.

The beloved Resident Evil gameplay remains largely unchanged, so fans of the series will be capping zombies, pushing statues and eating herbs like pros. However, the graphics have been seriously overhauled since the old PlayStation versions. Gone are the boring 2-D backgrounds; Capcom has replaced them with fully 3-D polygonal environments, yielding creepier, more dynamic scenes.

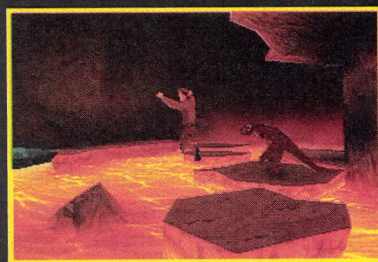
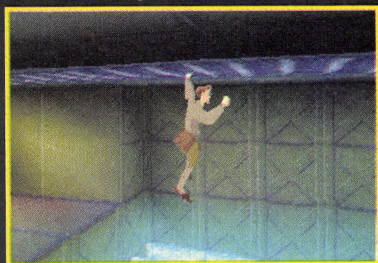


Since this is the "complete" version of CODE: Veronica, PS2 gamers will be getting some cool new features. Seven minutes of new CG cinemas help to flesh out the story, spooky villain Albert Wesker gets more onscreen time and Claire's sidekick, Steve Burnside, gets a new haircut (he no longer looks exactly like Leonardo DiCaprio).

Also, this package will have playable demo of the highly anticipated Devil May Cry. ■

Disney's Atlantis: The Lost Empire

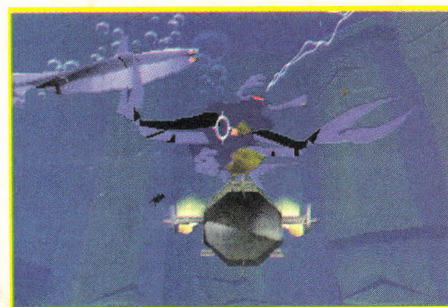
○○○○○ Publisher: SCEA
 ○○○○○ System: PS One
 ○○○○○ Availability: Now



Fans of the movie should be very happy, indeed, to get a chance to play Sony's Atlantis game. The deep, immersive and beautiful nature of the film translates well to a late PlayStation game. You'll find large environments to explore and you'll be able to relive your favorite moments of the movie.

The game allows you to play as the movie's characters, including Milo, Rourke, Moliere, Vinny, Helga and Audrey. These characters each have their own special abilities and using the right one at the right time can be the key to exploring the underwater majesty of Atlantis.

Not only can you choose your favorite character, four different vehicles are at your disposal to investigate the briny deep. Take the helm of a submarine and explore the murky depths or drive a truck through



the mysterious caverns. There's even the ability to destroy walls using a digger to find Atlantis' hidden mysteries!

With so many different combinations of vehicles to use and people to pilot them, fans of the Disney movie will have no trouble remaining entertained. With a mixture of traditional adventure, action and puzzle-solving elements, this is one game that should keep your television buzzing with the ancient mysteries of Atlantis. ■

Spec Ops 2

○○○○○ Publisher: Take 2
 ○○○○○ System: PS One
 ○○○○○ Available: Now



The original Spec Ops burned up the PlayStation charts like wildfire, providing a bargain-priced gaming experience with its \$10 price tag. If you got your money's worth out of the first Spec Ops, you should don your camo fatigues and storm your local game store to snag this sequel.

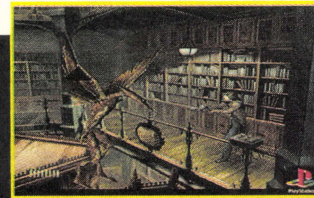
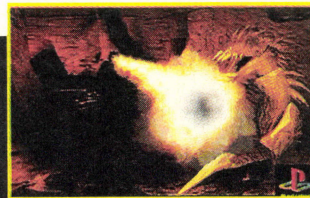
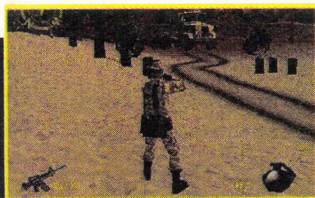
This time, the squad-based commando action has a global scale as you lead your regiment into battle at several locals around the world. Basically a slightly tamer version of Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six, this game should appeal to anyone with an interest in sniper rifles and \$10 to spare. ■

Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare

○○○○○ Publisher: Infogrames
 ○○○○○ System: PS One
 ○○○○○ Availability: Now



Edward Carnby is a sleuth of the supernatural. It's no surprise you'll find him poking around the haunted Shadow Island, checking out the spooks, ghouls and creepy-crawlies infesting the decrepit mansion there. Ever since the original Alone in the Dark years ago for PC, we've had a fascination with horror video games. This heritage is borne out in the latest adventure. Some might say that this game is a lot like Resident Evil, but the truth is really the other way around. At any rate, fans of the Umbrella Corporation will have a great idea what to expect from this monster-filled horror escapade. Bring your shotgun and be ready for surprises. ■



Final Fantasy Chronicles

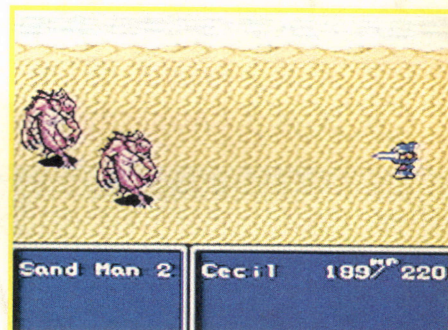
○○○○○ **Publisher:** Square
○○○○○ **System:** PS One
○○○○○ **Available:** July



Square once again treads the nostalgic road to the halcyon days of 16-bit games with this compilation. Contained within are enhanced versions of Final Fantasy IV and Chrono Trigger, two of the most highly respected Super Nintendo role-playing games of all time.

FFIV was originally titled Final Fantasy II when it was released for the SNES because the real Final Fantasy II and III games for the 8-bit Nintendo never came out in the U.S. Sporting a few new CG cinemas and a snappy new translation, this PlayStation version is the definitive version of what many believe to be the greatest Final Fantasy of all time.

Chrono Trigger isn't exactly a Final Fantasy game, but several of the key staff members are longtime FF alums. Also, fans of Dragon Ball Z will



recognize the character designs of Akira Toriyama, the creator of DBZ. An epic tale of swords, magic and time travel, this game is a real fan favorite among Square aficionados.

Chrono Cross, the sequel to Chrono Trigger, made a big splash last summer, and this PlayStation version of CT features a new ending that directly links to the plot of its sequel.

It's great to see the games finally getting the recognition they deserve. ■

Battle Hunter

○○○○○ **Publisher:** A1 Games
○○○○○ **System:** PS One
○○○○○ **Available:** Summer



In the future story told by Battle Hunter, there has been a third world war of great consequence. Now, to salvage the technology that existed before this cataclysm, mercenaries called "Hunters" are sent into the depths of ruined cities to seek out the these fruits of the past. It's your job, as a Hunter, to find the best items before any of your rivals do.

This four-player competitive RPG will have you racing against your friends to grab the goods. Of course, you can always let them find it and steal it from them, but that wouldn't be fair, would it? It's up to you! Battle Hunter is an adventure that changes every time thanks to its competitive gameplay and unique atmosphere. ■

Who Wants to be a Millionaire? 3rd Edition

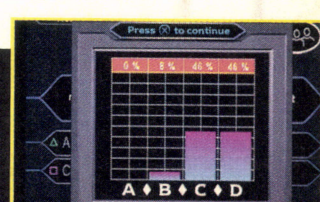
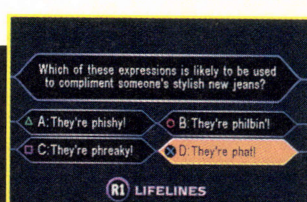
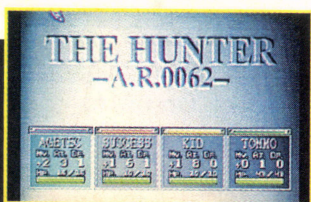
○○○○○ **Publisher:** SCEA
○○○○○ **System:** PS One
○○○○○ **Available:** Now



Apparently the last version of this unstoppable game show was not Sony's final answer, as this all-new version buzzes onto the PS One with a slew of new questions.

Of course, Regis Philbin reprises his role as the annoying yet lovable host. He's got a fresh arsenal of annoying comments, obnoxious quips and half-baked jokes waiting in the wings.

The game faithfully recreates the hit TV program, including the helpful lifelines and overly dramatic musical score. Sadly, there's no real money to be won here, merely the respect of your peers. ■

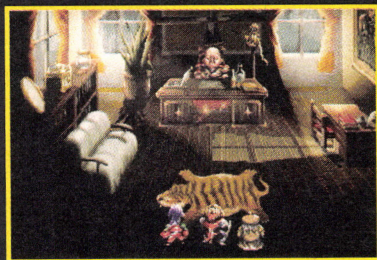
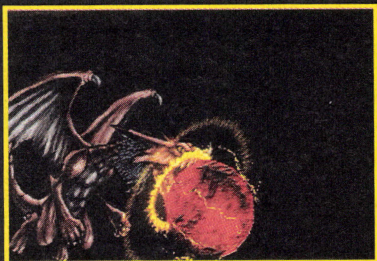


Arc the **Lad** Collection

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Working Designs

○○○○○ **System:** PS One

○○○○○ **Availability:** Now



In the early days of PlayStation, when the first Arc the Lad came out in Japan, RPGs weren't so popular. They are now, and Working Designs has decided to package the whole series together in a fond farewell to the system that popularized the RPG.

In the first game (which dates to 1995) you'll play as, naturally, a lad named Arc. He's a young hero set to right wrongs and triumph over evil in the usual way. As ever in an RPG, you must gain stalwart companions as you move closer to your goal.

The more daring Arc II concerns Erik and his adventures, which begin in a large and much less medieval city. The cool bonus here is that you can transfer characters you earned in the first game into the second.

The third game concerns a boy named Alec and his exploits and



unlike the first two is presented in polygons. A bonus disc containing a monster battling game released in Japan as a companion to Arc the Lad II rounds out the package.

Strategy RPG fans will surely find this to be the PlayStation's ultimate treasure chest. ■

Digimon: Digital Card Battle

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Bandai

○○○○○ **System:** PS One

○○○○○ **Availability:** July



Anyone who's a fan of the Digimon show knows that there's more than meets the eye. While at first you might get the impression that it's just a Pokémon wannabe, there's a lot more bubbling under the surface. The same holds true for Digimon: Digital Card Battle. This game allows you to simulate the Digimon collectible card game, but its added features and complexities make it much more interesting than any other collectible card game available for any other system.

Just like on the show, the Digimon and their tamers are chockful of special abilities they can use to win. Do you want to Armor Digivolve your monster? You can, using a Digi-Egg. DNA Digivolving lets you combine cards to create more powerful monsters, allowing for unlimited combinations. With many different



Power Up cards, you'll be able to change the stats of your Digimon at will, allowing for the most powerful monsters yet.

When you're ready to fight, scope out the different arenas. If you're a newbie, take it to the Junior Arena. Digimon masters can have a blast in the Professional Arena.

Digimon fans and card-gamers have a lot to look forward to with Bandai's Digimon: Digital Card Battle. ■

Hoshigami: Ruining Blue Earth

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Atlus
○○○○○ **System:** PS One
○○○○○ **Availability:** August



Hoshigami: Ruining Blue Earth presents a new quest for strategy RPG fans. Following in the footsteps of the classic Final Fantasy Tactics, Hoshigami tells the story of a young mercenary named Fazz who quickly becomes embroiled in a battle between nations and empires. Called forth by Reuperl, the guard commander of Nightweld Empire, you'll become quickly acclimated to battle in the lush environments created by the developers. It's typical RPG fare but the quality of the game's character designs, graphics, and play mechanics helps elevate these elements to a higher level.

The game's battles are played on a multilevel map. During each turn, your characters can be ordered to walk to different places on the battlefield, and by approaching an enemy you can

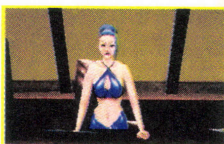


initiate combat. The unique features of Hoshigami like the "Ready for Action Point System" and "Session System" allow you to take strategy to new heights. If you've been looking for a complex and enjoyable strategy game, this is definitely the one for you.

With a detailed and intriguing plot, stylish graphics and an involved gameplay mechanism, Hoshigami has everything you could want from a new strategy RPG. ■

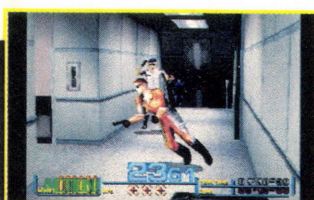
Time Crisis: Project Titan

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Namco
○○○○○ **System:** PS One
○○○○○ **Available:** Now



The president of Caruba (you know, that island nation kind of like Cuba mixed with Aruba) has been assassinated, and secret agent Richard Miller has been framed as the murderer. As the brave yet unlucky Agent Miller, you have 48 hours to clear your name, discover the identity of the true killer and unravel the mystery of Project Titan. Apparently, the easiest way to accomplish this is by shooting lots of people in the head, so let the bullets fly!

Time Crisis allows you to dodge incoming fire, which deepens the gameplay considerably. Project Titan also adds a new multihiding feature, which lets you view and attack from different angles. ■



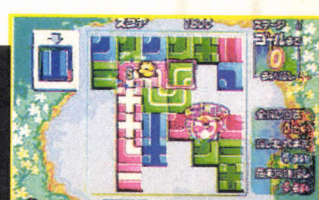
Tic Tac Chicken

○○○○○ **Publisher:** A1 Games
○○○○○ **System:** PS One
○○○○○ **Availability:** Summer



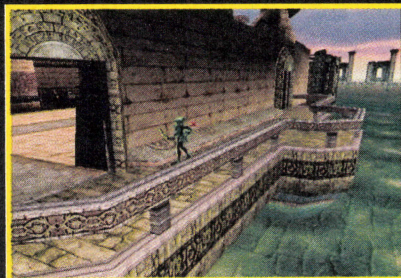
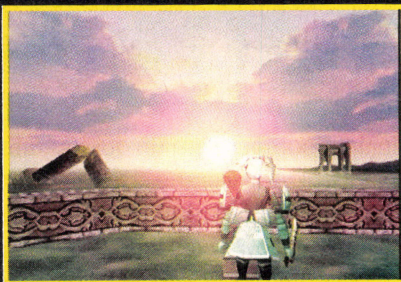
Well, it may not be much like tic-tac-toe or chicken farming, but Tic Tac Chicken has you setting up multicolored puzzle pieces as a pathway for a crazy chicken to wander down. Once you line up enough of the same color, the chicken can make its way through your creation and move closer to the goal. Progression through the game allows you to access newer, harder and more complex levels.

If you get bored of solving the chicken's problems, you can always take on a friend in the versus mode. Puzzle fans who are looking for some thoughtful action that involves wacky fowl (and who isn't?) will be very satisfied with the crazy capers of this twisted bird. ■



Phantasy Star Online Ver. 2

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Publisher: Sega
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ System: Dreamcast
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Available: July



Sega's elite Sonic Team's revolutionary online RPG took the world by storm earlier this year, bringing thousands of Dreamcast players together for an unprecedented online experience. Language barriers were demolished, unlikely friendships were forged and countless monsters were slain. As undeniably brilliant as PSO was, players began making suggestions on how to improve the game. Sega listened.

Phantasy Star Online Version 2.0 addresses all of the main concerns voiced by players. Foremost, the level cap has been raised from 100 to 200, effectively doubling the length you can play before maxing out your character. Of course, characters from the previous version can be easily transplanted into Ver. 2.0.

Sega has also added Lobby Ball, a soccer-like game that up to 12 players can compete in simultaneously. If you're looking for a deadlier contest, challenge the new Battle Mode, a fighting arena in which players duel for spoils.

The regular online game has also

been infused with new content. Tons of new items, mags and weapons have been added, making the quest for rares even more exciting. You can also explore two new areas, challenge new enemies and even new bosses. The original stages receive a new face-lift, thanks to



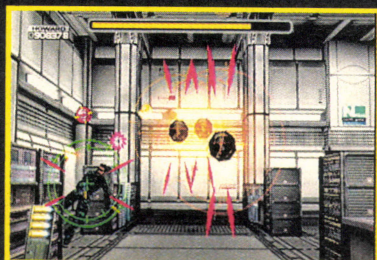
new day/night time passage effects.

Finally, a new Challenge Mode tests the endurance of your character with a never-ending dungeon that gets increasingly difficult.

If you're already a PSO player, you are no doubt hyped for this stellar upgrade. If you missed out on the revolution last time, now is your chance to join in! ■

Confidential Mission

○○○○ **Publisher:** Sega
 ○○○○ **System:** Dreamcast
 ○○○○ **Available:** Now



Sega basically invented the 3-D light gun game with the Virtua Cop series, and then went on to inject a ghastly dose of horror into the genre with The House of the Dead games. Confidential Mission is the next evolution in shooting games, a gun game starring a dashing secret agent not unlike James Bond.

One of two players can grab a pistol and start blasting through three giant stages packed with multiple paths, weapon power-ups, special tools, disguises and stealth activity. The branching levels change depending on which paths you take, so you'll be tempted to replay the game over and over again to see all that it has to offer.

The Dreamcast version also includes some nifty special modes not found in the arcade, like the Agent



Academy training course and the Top Agent challenge mode. Another cool addition is a special targeting display that lets you know precisely where your bullets entered your victims' bodies.

With new options, such as the targeting display, Sega has made it clear that it has learned to make its awesome gun games even better.

Confidential Mission supports three of the Dreamcast light guns currently on the market. ■

Soldier of Fortune

○○○○ **Publisher:** Crave
 ○○○○ **System:** Dreamcast
 ○○○○ **Available:** Now



Soldier of Fortune has become infamous with PC gamers for its ultraviolence. It even has the dubious honor of being the first PC game restricted in British Columbia due to its violent content. That's because when you frag somebody in SoF, he can die in a variety of gruesome ways, depending on where you shoot him.

The game also is well known for its cinematics and attention to detail; the fans of first-person shooting games who wish for the utmost in gore have had their prayers answered by this one. With a number of levels and multiplayer modes at your disposal, this game will give you plenty of violent variety. ■

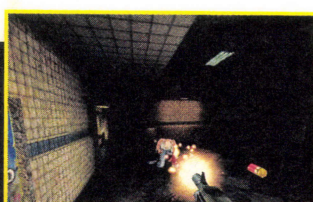
Alien Front Online

○○○○ **Publisher:** Sega
 ○○○○ **System:** Dreamcast
 ○○○○ **Available:** August



Pick your side — alien or human! You can play as either the vicious Triclops alien invaders or the Elite Guards on Earth determined to stop them in this multiplayer online shooter. Luckily, you're not alone on your side, as two teams of four players face off in the online arena. You can even communicate with real-time voice-over net, thanks to the microphone included with the game.

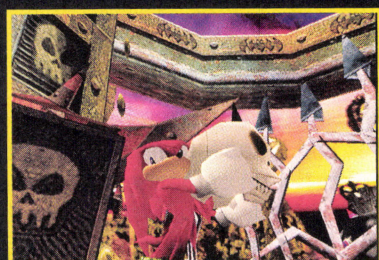
Humans fight with equipment like flamethrowers, grenade launchers, nuclear missiles and three types of heavily armored tanks. Aliens have their own hellish weaponry, including gravity balls, light swarms, meteor showers and robotic walkers. See you on the front lines...online! ■



DREAMCAST BUYER'S GUIDE

Sonic Adventure 2

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Sega
○○○○○ **System:** Dreamcast
○○○○○ **Available:** Now



Happy birthday, Sonic! Sega's blazing mascot celebrates a decade of fast living, unparalleled success and general coolness this June. Sega marks the occasion by releasing Sonic Adventure 2, a killer sequel to the best-selling 1999 smash.

Sonic Team carefully studied the previous title when creating this one, focusing on aspects that pleased gamers most. Many players felt bogged down by the slow-moving adventure scenes between levels. This time it's all action.

Once again, the game contains six playable characters, although they're not all heroes. Sonic, Tails and Knuckles comprise the hero team while Dr. Robotnik joins newcomers Shadow the Hedgehog and Rouge the Bat as adversaries.

Perhaps the coolest new feature is



a smattering of two-player versus modes, in which one good guy battles a bad guy in a contest of skill. Sonic and Shadow engage in a frenzied split-screen race to the finish, Rouge and Knuckles hunt for hidden gems, and Robotnik and Tails duke it out in giant walking robots.

The graphics scream with beautiful textures, giant environments and mind-boggling speed. A rocking soundtrack pumps the action even further. ■

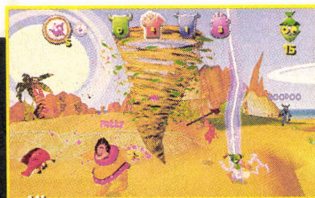
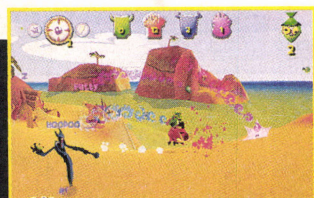
Ooga Booga

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Sega
○○○○○ **System:** Dreamcast
○○○○○ **Available:** Now



Ready for some multi-player combat? Ooga Booga is game that lets you take control of a wacky tropical islander and destroy your pals. This free-for-all takes place in an environment with plenty of traps. Once you control a number of tiki torches, for example, they'll automatically fire bullets whenever your opponents approach. You can also summon earthquakes or meteor showers to wipe out your foes.

But don't get the idea that this is another ultraviolent FPS; it's more of a wacky competitive romp and well suited to SegaNet. If you've ever wanted to fight friends over the Dreamcast modem, this could be the free-for-all that you've been searching for. ■



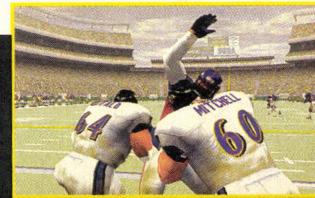
NCAA College Football 2K2

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Sega
○○○○○ **System:** Dreamcast
○○○○○ **Available:** August



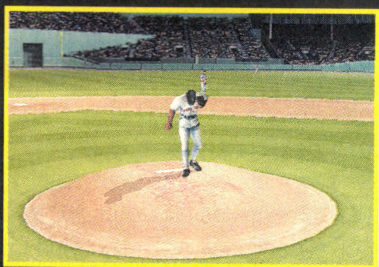
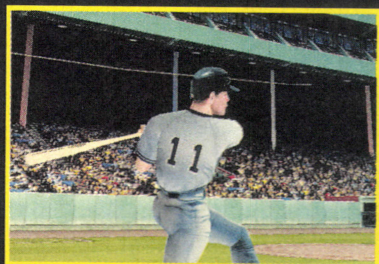
Sega and Visual Concepts bring their popular football engine to the college level for the first time in NCAA 2K2. The thrills of college ball are unique: As a collegiate athletic director, you'll recruit players, evaluate transfers, discipline players and arrange training programs for your boys. The fate of your team rests in your hands, as you can turn this ragtag bunch into bowl-game material through discipline and hard work.

In addition to the multiple modes, extensive playbooks, play-creation mode and voluminous stats, NCAA 2K2 offers a special feature no other college pigskin game boasts — online play. Take your team online and prove your dominance with players across the nation! ■



World Series Baseball 2K2

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Sega
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** Dreamcast
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



Last year's World Series Baseball game was a top seller, but its reputation wasn't too hot. Luckily, Sega kicked that misguided developer to the curb and brought in its star sports team, Visual Concepts, to handle World Series 2K2.

In addition to being worlds better than last year's game, World Series 2K2 adds online play and chat features — a feat no console baseball game has even done before!

WS2K2 offers five modes of play: Exhibition mode for when you're in a hurry, Season play for those in for the long haul, Playoffs if you want to jump straight to the drama, Home Run Derby for the showboats, and Online play for when you want to reach out and touch your friends.

The actual gameplay has also gotten a major refit, as the fielding,



batting and pitching interfaces have all been improved.

The graphics are top-notch, with realistically detailed players and stadiums. Ted Robinson delivers professional commentary, further enhancing the consummate realism of this simulation.

Evidently Sega is serious about its franchise. Forget about all the painful memories of World Series 2K1 and open your heart to this newly renovated series. ■

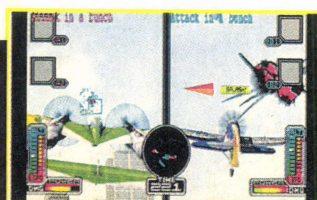
Propeller Arena

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Sega
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** Dreamcast
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



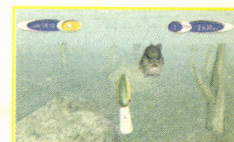
There may be no better application of network gaming than a dogfight sim. That's why Sega is bringing us Propeller Arena, a game that allows you to soar through the skies blowing up friends and foes alike, live on SegaNet. The game, subtitled Aviation Battle Championship, is a competition between players to become the No. 1 flyboy on Dreamcast.

Eight different characters with different statistics are selectable, and their planes will perform differently under varying situations. Find the best one for you and you'll be the king of the skies. With six-player online battles — complete with voice chat using the Dreamcast microphone — this is a dogfight experience unlike any before it. ■



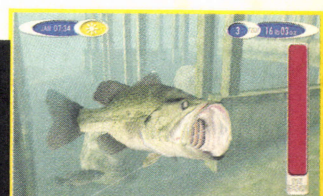
Bass Fishing 2

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Sega
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** Dreamcast
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



The original Sega Bass Fishing set the fishing world afire with its revolutionary gameplay, realistic graphics and surprising depth. This sequel builds upon that watershed title by adding a host of new options, including the much-requested two-player Versus Mode.

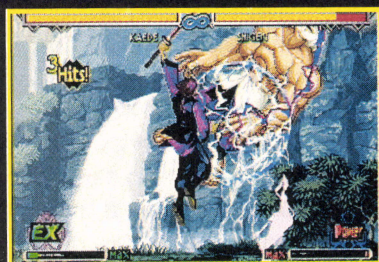
Challenge a collection of massive lakes, carefully recreated from real-life locals. Each lake has genuine ecology: seasons pass, the sun moves through the sky, water temperatures fluctuate and inclement weather can move in. More than 100 lures await your cavernous tackle box, but you'll have to defeat the new computer-controlled AI fishermen to win them. Overall, Sega Bass Fishing 2 is a relaxing and rewarding way to waste some quality time. ■



DREAMCAST BUYER'S GUIDE

The Last Blade 2 — Heart of the Samurai

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Agetec
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** Dreamcast
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August

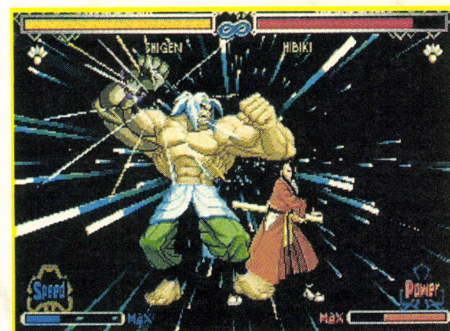


The original Last Blade debuted on the Neo Geo arcade system a few years ago; its mix of stylish characters and fast, exciting gameplay gained it a great reputation quickly among fighting game fans.

Now, Agetec brings its sequel to the Dreamcast in the U.S. and anyone who has an interest in 2-D fighters should definitely check it out.

The game is reminiscent of a cross between the Street Fighter Alpha games and the Samurai Shodown series; you'll play a warrior wielding a weapon but the game's style is pure anime perfection. Fans of Rurouni Kenshin/Samurai X, in particular, should be enthusiastic about the game's presentation.

The warriors of Last Blade are unique and each one has his or her



own style and moves. The main character, Kaede, plays like a slightly skewed version of Street Fighter's Ryu, substituting slashes of his lethal katana for punches.

The game's graphics are replicated perfectly by the powerful Dreamcast hardware and no detail is spared. With tons of characters to pick from and a style all its own, Last Blade 2 manages to stand out from the crowded pack of Dreamcast fighters. ■

Razor Freestyle Scooter

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Crave
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** Dreamcast
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



The PlayStation version of Razor Freestyle Scooter offered a cuter, friendlier take on the Tony Hawk phenomenon starring kids in a quest to rescue their friends from a confused robot. Of course, the way you did this is impressing him with your masterful scooter skills.

Not much has changed in the Dreamcast version; the gameplay is the same, but the graphics are greatly improved. The scooting action is as much fun as it ever was, though, and you'll be able to pull tricks until the cows come home. Those of you looking for something a little different but still want to get your scoot on should check this one out. ■

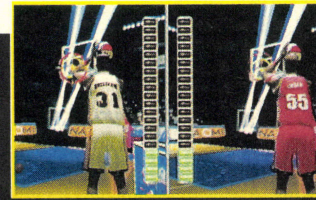
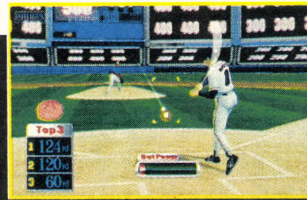
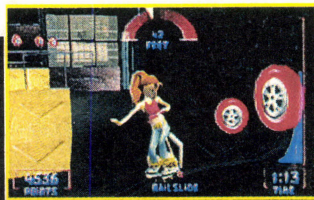
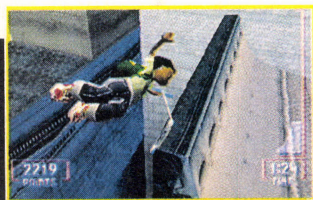
Sports Jam

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Agetec
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** Dreamcast
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



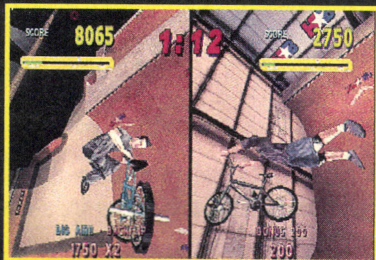
Agetec rescued this abandoned Sega Naomi port from obscurity, delivering eight sporting events in fast-paced arcade style. Streamlined versions of baseball, basketball and football named "The Great Slugger", "3 Point Shootout", and "The Kicker" are the big draws, cutting past the lengthy setup process and constrictive rules of traditional sports simulation games.

Other sports in the Jam include soccer, tennis, golf, hockey, and cycling. Each game is simple and addictive, reminiscent of Konami's old-school Track and Field titles. The 12 mini-games of Sports Jam might not stand up to the Maddens and FIFAs of the world, but this value-added package is a great sampler of fun sports action. ■



Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

○ ○ ○ ○ Publisher: Activision
 ○ ○ ○ ○ System: Dreamcast
 ○ ○ ○ ○ Available: August



There probably aren't going to be too many more grade-A extreme sports titles for the Dreamcast, but that's OK — we've got the first two Tony Hawk games and now Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX. This game is based on the same building blocks as the first Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, but instead of controlling the skateboard legend and his cronies, you'll be able to trick out with a bike.

Barring obvious differences in maneuverability, the game is quite similar to THPS. Of course, there will be grinds and tricks galore, and a two-player mode rounds out the package.

Just like in the Tony Hawk games, you'll be able to pick from an array of professionals and take to the courses on authentic gear. The number of combinations allowed



for is truly amazing. If you want to build up your rider, you can do it. Pulling tricks and getting cash is the name of the game, and if you can ride with the best of 'em then you stand a chance to top even Mat Hoffman himself.

If you're looking for an alternative to THPS, but want to keep it extreme, then this is the game for you. Hopefully, other new games, like the new snowboarding titles, will push the genre even further. ■

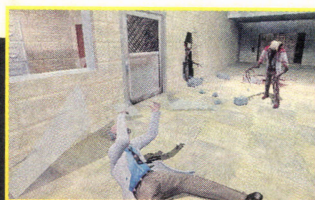
Half-Life

○ ○ ○ ○ Publisher: Sierra
 ○ ○ ○ ○ System: Dreamcast
 ○ ○ ○ ○ Available: Now



Half-Life is perhaps the most acclaimed FPS ever to come out for the PC. Not only did it win just about industry award and sell tons of copies, it is generally accepted to be the pinnacle of FPS design. The Dreamcast version is even more impressive because it's been totally revamped graphically.

If that weren't enough, the developers have added a lengthy new story that stars a security guard trapped at the Black Mesa plant during the game's catastrophic events. If you've been aching for an FPS that has an interesting story, innovative gameplay and a lengthy one-player mode that doesn't get boring, this is certainly a classic of the genre that you can't miss. ■



Floigan Bros.

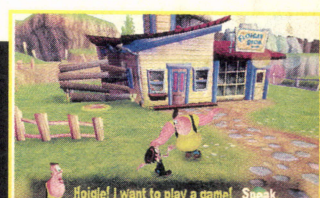
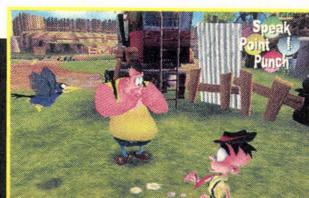
○ ○ ○ ○ Publisher: Sega
 ○ ○ ○ ○ System: Dreamcast
 ○ ○ ○ ○ Available: August



Although best known for its popular NBA2K and NFL2K franchises, Visual Concepts is branching out into the world of action games with Floigan Brothers, a wacky platform/puzzle hybrid firmly rooted in comedy.

You control Hoigle Floigan, the brains of the junkyard-owning brotherly duo. While he's a shrewd operator, Hoigle requires his brother's brawn to accomplish tasks. However, convincing the bumbling Moigle to do your bidding is no easy task. You must trick the dull-witted oaf into performing actions by making him happy, sad or angry. In-game clues let you know which emotion is required at each juncture.

This may be the next hot franchise character for Sega, but only time will tell. ■



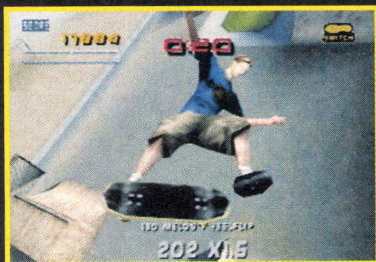
NINTENDO BUYER'S GUIDE

Tony Hawk 2 N64

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Activision

○○○○○ **System:** Nintendo 64

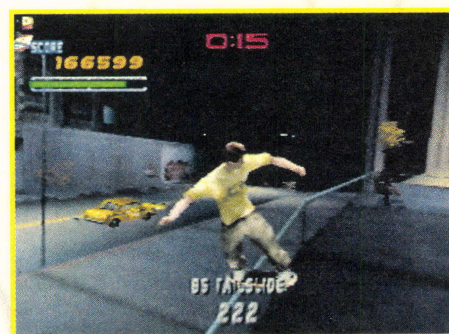
○○○○○ **Available:** July



With the Nintendo GameCube quickly approaching, the Nintendo 64 release list has all but vanished, yet Activision bravely readies Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 for the venerable console. Originally announced last year and subsequently canceled, the game is now miraculously on track for a late summer release.

If you haven't heard of the Tony Hawk games...where have you been? Activision's series has single-handedly revitalized the entire extreme sports scene, if not the entire gaming world in general. You choose your real-life skater (or make your own from scratch) and make your way through a series of levels.

Each stage has a list of goals to accomplish; some are based on scoring points while others demand that you perform certain tricks.



The game's trick interface and razor-sharp control are the true stars, inspiring an army of sub-par competitors. You'll be pulling out crazy tricks in no time thanks to the instinctive control and gradual learning curve.

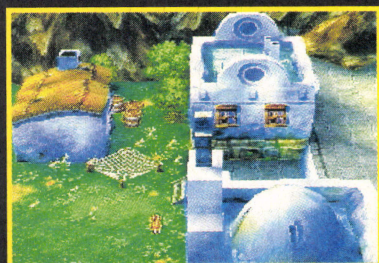
So, how does this version fare? Well, the gameplay is perfect, though graphically, the series has seen prettier locals. But all in all, the sluggish frame rate doesn't ruin the experience. ■

Dragon Warrior 3 GBC

○○○○○ **Publisher:** Enix

○○○○○ **System:** Game Boy Color

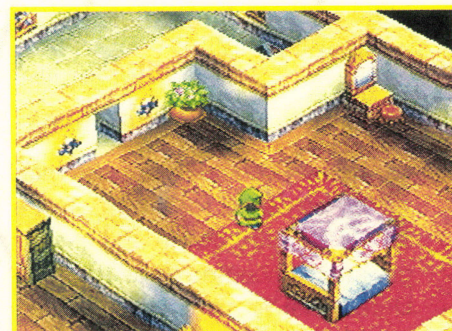
○○○○○ **Available:** July



The Dragon Warrior series has been around since the NES, and it's provided some of the most groundbreaking and engaging role playing experiences to be had. While Dragon Warrior III is a remake of the NES classic, there's no doubt that it's one of the top RPGs for the GBC.

Enix has gone to every length to make sure this game, which is a much more advanced version than the NES original, shines with quality through and through. From the game's impressive graphics and character animation to the lengthy quest you'll enjoy, Dragon Warrior 3 is a dream for every portable-RPG fan.

Those of you who played Dragon Warrior I&II should be interested to hear that this game finishes up the first trilogy of the Dragon Warrior

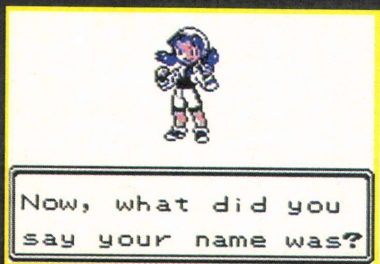
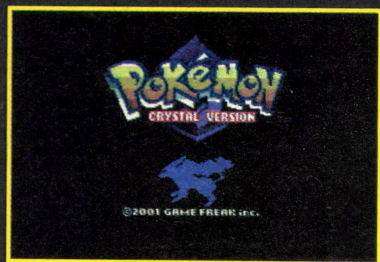


saga. The game's complex RPG gameplay, great length and interesting scenario truly bring closure to Dragon Warrior's first great story. RPG fans owe it to themselves to play this game to find out what shaped these games into the great tales we love today!

The game hasn't had a chance to shine in the U.S. for many years now, and in this new, improved format, it's that much more amazing. Don't let this great title pass you by. ■

Pokémon Crystal

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Nintendo
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** Nintendo 64
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** July

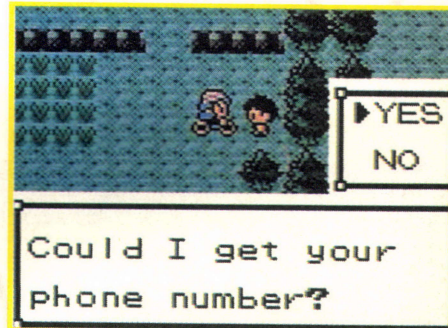


In Japan, Pokémon Crystal was one of the first Game Boy titles to use the new Mobile System GB cellular phone adapter. An amazing world of online features and special connectivity options were introduced to the world of pocket monsters, and the Pokémon fans rejoiced.

Well, in America, the lack of a universal cellular standard made that impossible, but Nintendo has graced us with this new title anyway. Honestly though, how many kids in the U.S. have cell phones?

New features include the ability to play as a female Pokémon trainer for the first time — a shocking departure from the earlier male-dominated versions. Finally, female players will feel a sense of Poké-equality.

The battle scenes have also been visually retooled, and now your creatures' attacks are fully animated.



Now, when Pikachu goes in for the thundershock, he'll do more than just wiggle from side to side a bit. If you search carefully, you'll also find some other hidden surprises!

Only the most diehard of Pokémaniacs will probably enjoy this one if they've already played Gold or Silver.

However, those jonesing for another pocket monster fix will probably love this title. ■

Toki Toki

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Capcom
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** GB Color
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** July



Capcom brings exciting puzzle action starring a wacky bird called Toki Toki to the Game Boy Color. You'll embark on a quest to gather an army of eggs as you travel throughout various environments. In each locale, you'll have to use your brain to figure out which of Toki Toki's special tools and skills to use to pass the level.

This is definitely the right puzzle game for deep thinkers who want to get the most challenge out of their GBC. With over 60 levels of crazy puzzles to complete, there's no way you'll breeze through this one. If you've been waiting for a long and difficult quest that's filled with puzzle action, look no further. ■

Commander Keen

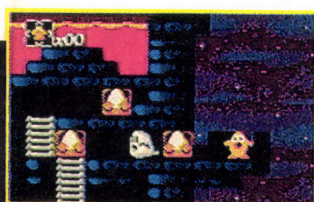
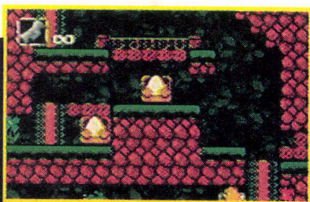
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Activision
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** GB Color
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** Now



While most Game Boy Color fans have probably never heard of Commander Keen, odds are that their older siblings have. He starred in several ancient shareware computer games back in the '80s, and it's pretty surprising to see him back in 2001.

The traditional side-scrolling action has returned, and you'll lead the intrepid Commander through over 35 levels of precarious platforming peril. You've got a handy pogo stick and an even handier pistol at your disposal, so you might have a shot at reclaiming all the missing plasma crystals.

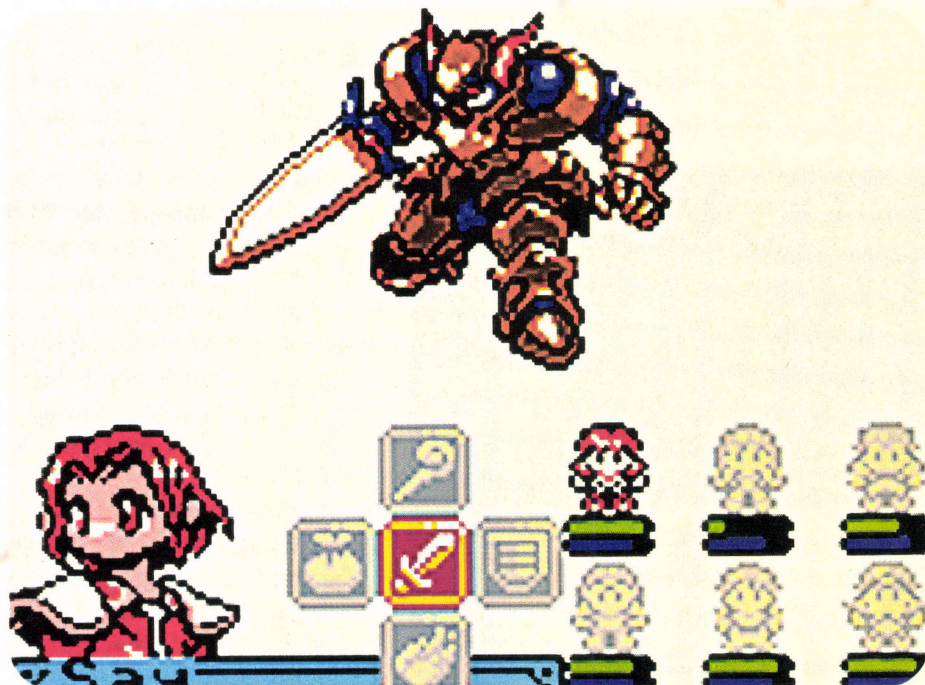
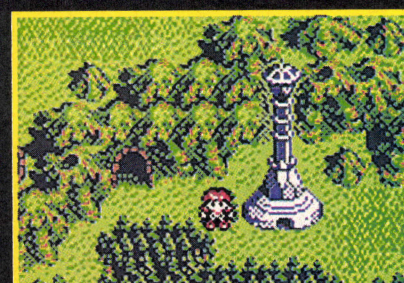
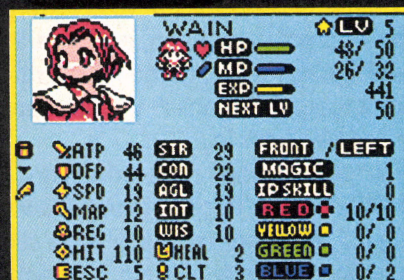
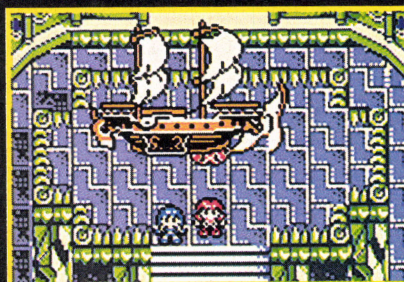
Overall, this one's for those looking for old-school flavor on a new system. ■



NINTENDO BUYER'S GUIDE

Lufia III

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Natsume
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** Game Boy Color
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** July

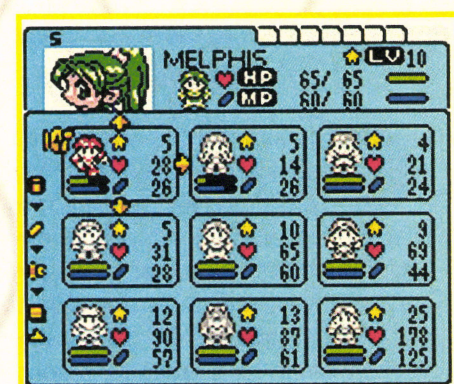


The Lufia series has been around for quite awhile, although there hasn't been a new game in the series since the last gasp of the SNES. The series has been typically underrated by audiences, and very few people know just what incredibly charming and fun RPG experiences they miss when they pass up these games. That should all change when Lufia: The Legend Returns hits the GBC. This, the latest tale in the Lufia saga, is packed full of the elements that have made the first two games in the series so enthralling: characters, dialogue and gameplay.

The story of the Lufia series revolves around an eternal battle with a race of beings known as Sinistrals. These mysterious, powerful supernatural beings are much like gods – and they want to destroy the human race. As Wain, the latest in a line of heroes sprung from Maxim (the legendary hero of the Lufia series), you must battle the Sinistrals to defend the human race.

This time around, you'll have plenty of friends to join you. Up to nine characters can join your party

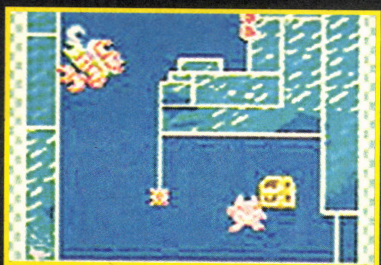
(and your battles) at any one time. These friends will add both their power and their skill to your quest. They will also lend their voice to the story. Another important facet of the Lufia series is that you're able to avoid enemy encounters in dungeons since the enemies are visi-



ble. This is a great way to keep the game running at a clip and helps out if you're having problems in dungeons. Since puzzles are also a big part of Lufia's appeal, you should expect to find many challenging ones in the depths of this latest sequel. Truly, the biggest and best RPG experience you can hope for on GBC has arrived. ■

Qix Adventure

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Natsume
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** Game Boy Color
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



The classic 80s arcade game is back, with a new adventure twist! What happens when you take one of the most addictive and fun classics and add an RPG-style quest? Qix Adventure! If you haven't played Qix (pronounced "kicks") before, that's reason enough to check out this game. It's best described as a box-drawing puzzle game. During each level your objective is to draw a square over as much as the screen as you can without being hit by the "Qix," a strange virus-like lifeform. If you manage to cover the screen with your boxes, you can pass to the next level. It's incredibly simple but utterly addictive.

Now, where does the adventure come into it? Well, as you travel throughout "Qix Island," you'll challenge all sorts of wonderful



characters in competitive games of Qix. The more you defeat, the more treasures you can win and the closer you come to escaping this mysterious island. There's even a two-player link battle mode so you can Qix your friends' butts!

With cute anime-style graphics reminiscent of Pokémon, an engaging quest filled with surprises and a brand new version of one of the best classic puzzlers all in one package, how can you go wrong? ■

Puchi Carat

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Natsume
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** GB Color
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** August



Puchi Carat is a puzzle game much like the classic Bust-A-Move that has you firing colored gems upwards to make them disappear. The difference is that the game also takes its play mechanics from games like Arkanoid and Alleyway, allowing for a block-busting good time that puzzle fans will appreciate. With 12 different characters to pick from cute anime-style graphics rounding out the package, this is one to watch.

Having the right mix of skill, luck and cuteness in one cartridge, Puchi Carat should prove an amusing time for fans of Bust-A-Move, Magical Drop or any of the other crystal-smashing puzzlers on GBC. ■

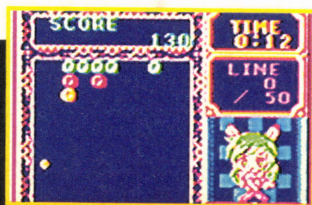
Return of the Ninja

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Publisher:** Natsume
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **System:** GB Color
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **Available:** Now



Amid all the halfhearted attempts on the Game Boy Color, it's refreshing to find a worthwhile, traditional action game for gamers of all ages. Return of the Ninja is such a title, offering old-fashioned martial-arts-flavored 2-D gameplay like that in Ninja Gaiden, The Legend of Kage and Shinobi.

You control a powerful ninja on a quest to protect the ancient land of Koga. However, the best strategy isn't to jump into danger with shuriken blazing. It's wiser to be stealthy and silent, avoiding confrontation in a Solid Snake fashion. Along the way, you'll bash some heads, learn four powerful Ninjitsu arts and collect tradable Ninja Cards. ■

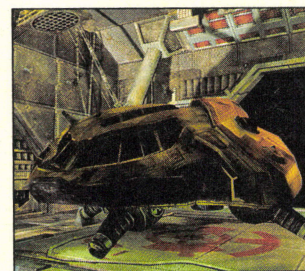
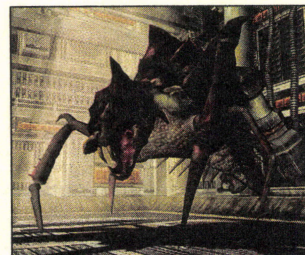


Coming Soon

Metroid Prime

Publisher: Nintendo
Platform: GameCube
Availability: 2002

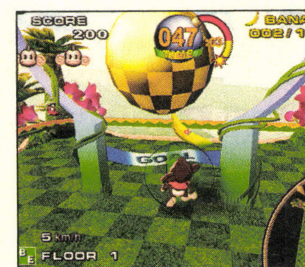
Description: Only a brief snippet of Metroid was shown on video at E³, and it appeared to be a cinematic cut scene. Metroid Prime is slated to ship within eight months of launch, so let's all wish for a truly worthy sequel. ■



Super Monkey Ball

Publisher: Sega
Platform: GameCube
Availability: 2002

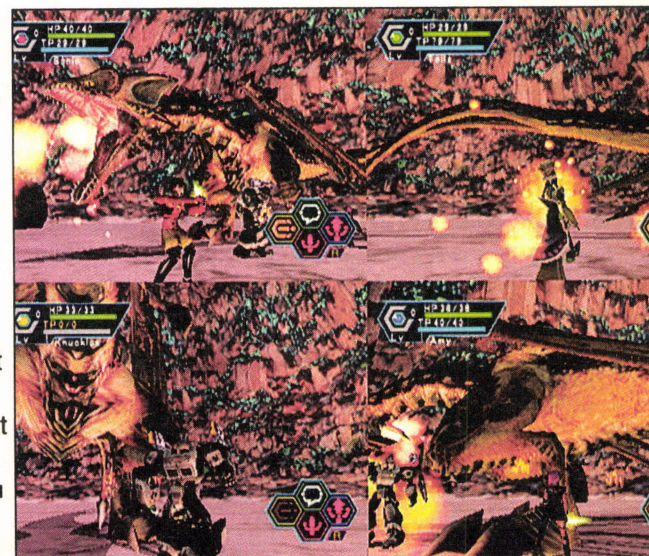
Description: This crazy game, geared towards kids, features multiplayer action and simplicity similar to Mario Party. Players use only the control stick to move their monkey, trapped in a ball, across various environments. ■



Phantasy Star Online Ver. 2

Publisher: Sega
Platform: GameCube
Availability: TBD

Description: Sega's mega-popular online RPG was a pleasant surprise at E³, busting out as the first presumably online title for the GameCube. The version on display at the show was still fairly early, but it did reveal a new split-screen mode. ■



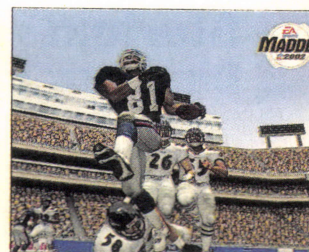
Madden NFL 2002

Publisher: EA Sports

System: GameCube

Availability: Winter

Description: EA Sports' flagship football franchise was shown for each of the big three next-gen consoles, but most pigskin pundits agreed that the GC version looked the best at this stage. ■



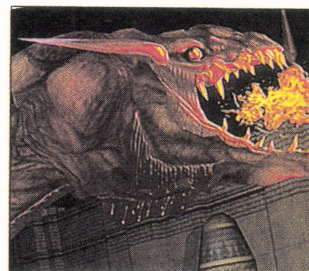
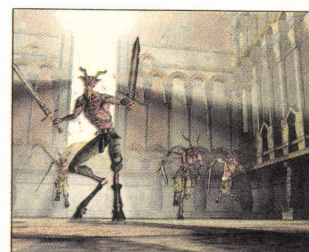
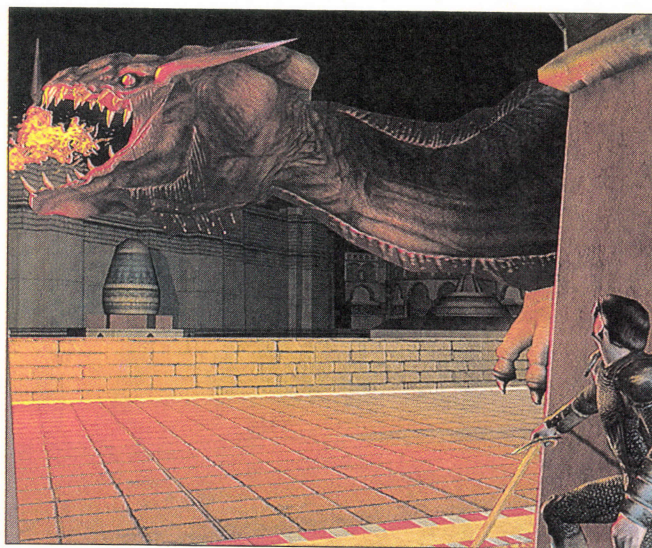
Raven Blade

Publisher: Nintendo

System: GameCube

Availability: 2002

Description: A dark, dramatic game for Nintendo, this game shows the company is truly going for an older audience. It features Dungeons & Dragons-style gameplay and quite a bit of graphic violence. ■



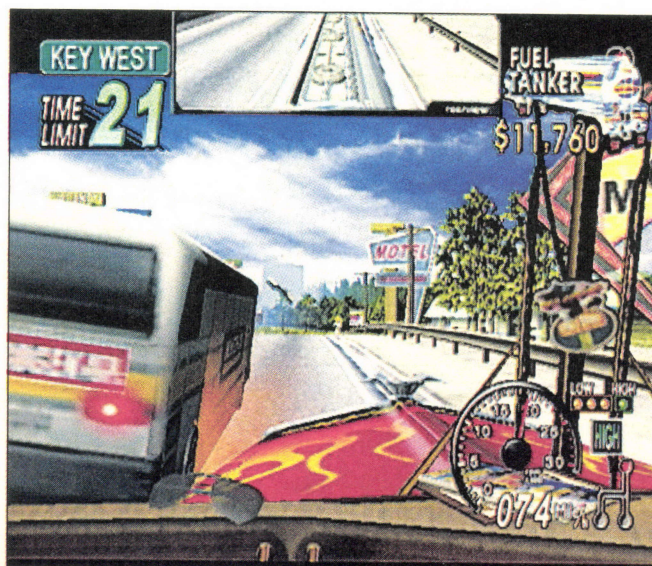
18 Wheeler: American Pro Trucker

Publisher: Acclaim

System: GameCube

Availability: Winter

Description: Get out yer CB and seat cushion — Sega's new truckin' arcade game is coming home. Similar in feel to Crazy Taxi, 18 Wheeler pits you in a race against big, bad truckers, competing with you to get the goods from point A to point B. ■



Coming Soon

Starfox: Dinosaur Planet

Publisher: Nintendo
Platform: GameCube
Availability: November

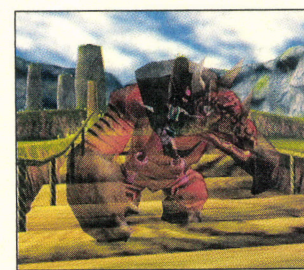
Description: Originally planned as an N64 game, Fox McCloud and crew return to fight for truth, justice, and the animal way. Unlike the previous Starfox games, this features hand-to-hand combat and exploration similar to Zelda. ■



Kameo

Publisher: Nintendo
Platform: GameCube
Availability: November

Description: You play Kameo (a female warrior princess), exploring exotic locals and eventually fighting the Dark Troll King. Besides a rare female lead, this game is unique because of the player's ability to "enter" different characters to access new areas. ■



Animal Forest

Publisher: Nintendo
Platform: GameCube
Availability: TBD

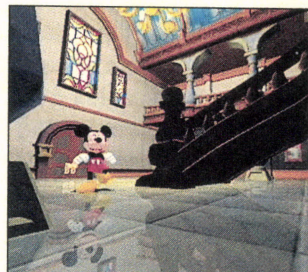
Description: A strange new game from Nintendo, this animal life simulation may get a cult following. The beauty is in the details, where players can change their wardrobes and, like Sega's Shenmue, play classic Nintendo games. ■



Mickey

Publisher: Nintendo
System: GameCube
Availability: TBD

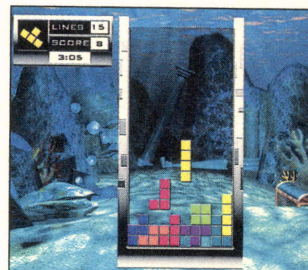
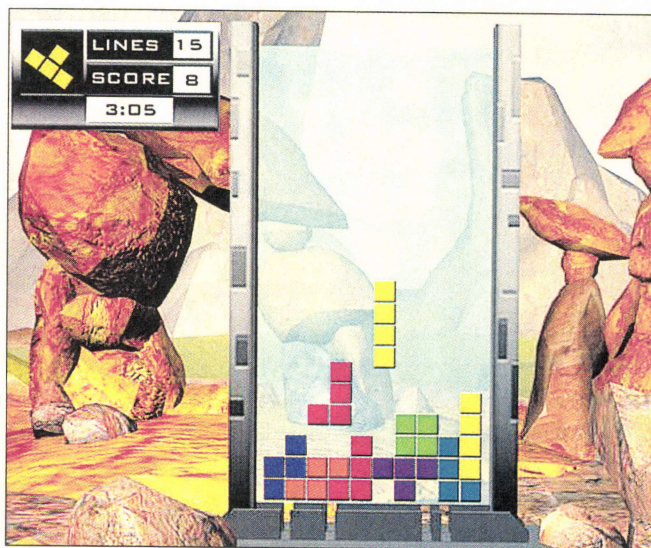
Description: The best-known animated character (next to Mario) is making an appearance on the GameCube. The 3D Mickey looks great and the game seems to be more adventure oriented than previous titles. ■



Tetris Worlds

Publisher: THQ
System: PlayStation 2
Availability: Summer

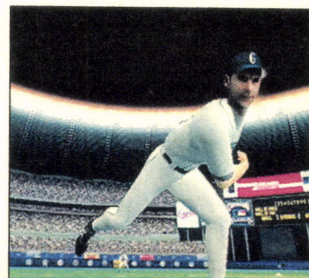
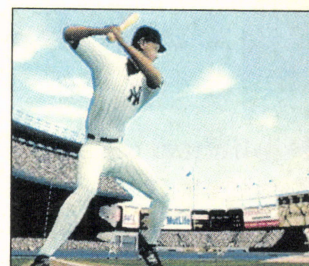
Description: In this variation of the classic puzzle game, players place the falling "Tetraminoes" across the bottom of a rectangular pit. Tetraminoes are created when four blocks join into seven different patterns. Includes four-player and online modes. ■



All-Star Baseball

Publisher: Acclaim
System: GameCube
Availability: Winter

Description: Acclaim is planning the first baseball game for the GameCube. It looks great, as these screens demonstrate, but we'll have to wait until later this year to see how well it plays. ■

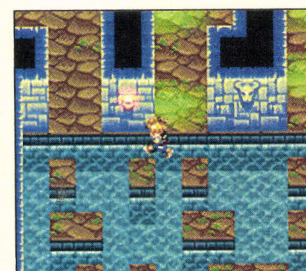


Coming Soon

Golden Sun

Publisher: Nintendo
System: Game Boy Advance
Availability: October

Description: While Nintendo is still hashing out the details on this role-playing game, it's evident the company plans to bring beautiful graphics and complex gameplay to the GBA. The design is reminiscent of classic RPGs, and hopefully will push the limits of the handheld. ■



DK Coconut Crackers

Publisher: Nintendo
System: Game Boy Advance
Availability: November

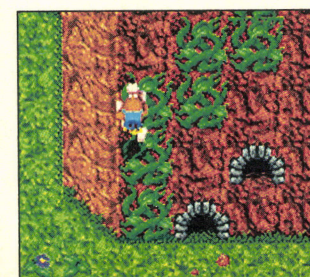
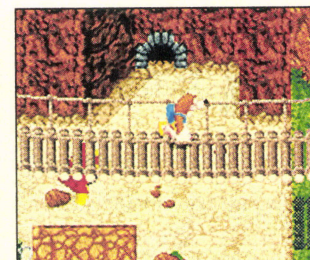
Description: This should be a great game for puzzle lovers. Donkey Kong and the rest of the gang eliminate pieces from the ever-shrinking game board while thwarting attacks from familiar DK enemies. ■



Banjo-Kazooie

Publisher: Nintendo
System: Game Boy Advance
Availability: TBD

Description: The infamous bear/bird duo are back, this time on the small screen. Even at this early stage Nintendo seems to have captured the look and feel of the popular series, so chances are they will translate the excellent gameplay as well. ■





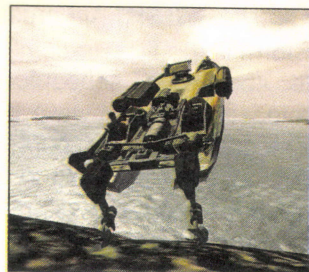
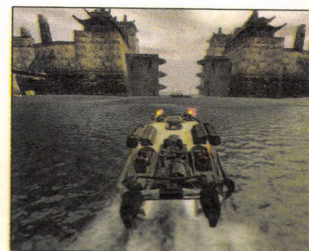
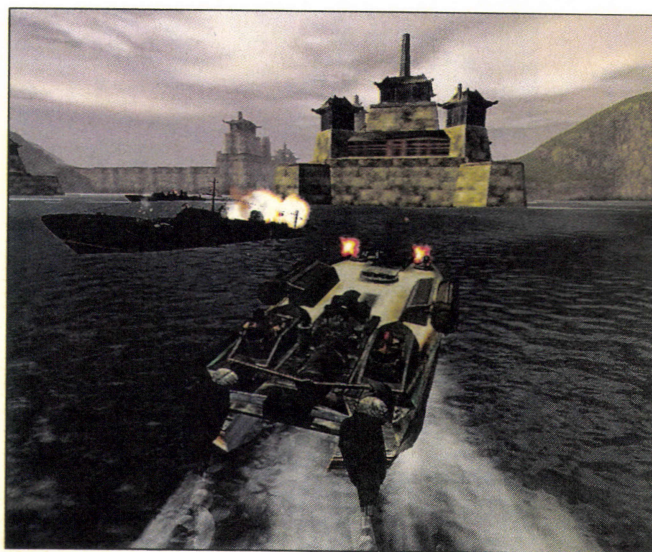
Blood Wake

Publisher: Microsoft

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: Choose from 10 different kinds of aquatic artillery machines — from catamarans to torpedo boats — in this water-based battle game. The game offers more than 25 single-player, story-based missions. ■



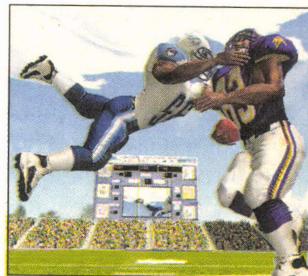
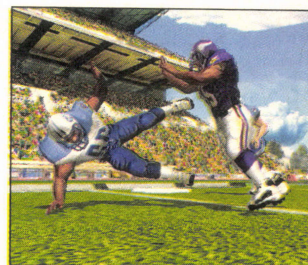
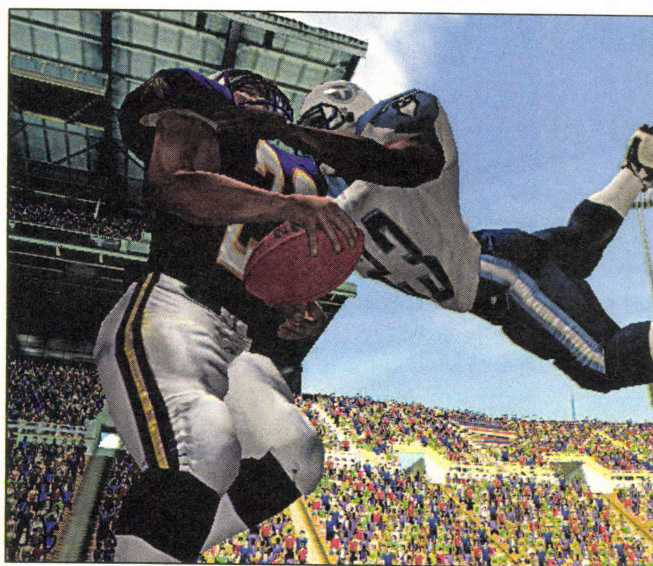
NFL Fever 2002

Publisher: Microsoft

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: Microsoft tries its hand at duplicating the success other systems have enjoyed in the gridiron genre. Microsoft will distinguish NFL Fever 2002 from competitors by offering a Legends Tournament and highlights reels after each game. ■



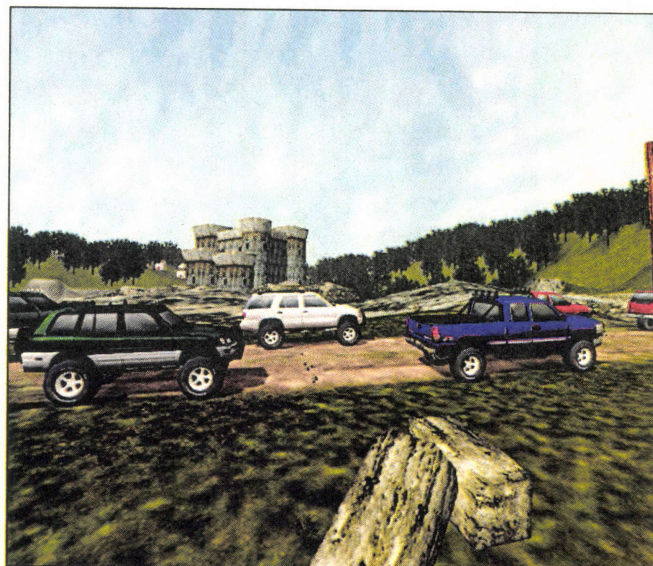
4x4 EVO 2

Publisher: Microsoft

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: Blast through snow-filled roads and other taxing conditions in this first-wave-release, off-road driving adventure for the Xbox. Boasts multiple camera angles — including cockpit, chase close, chase far, television, side, front, ground and blimp view. ■



Coming Soon

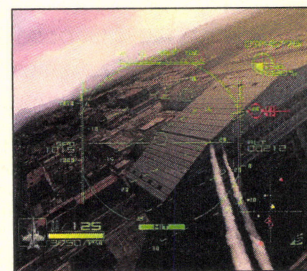
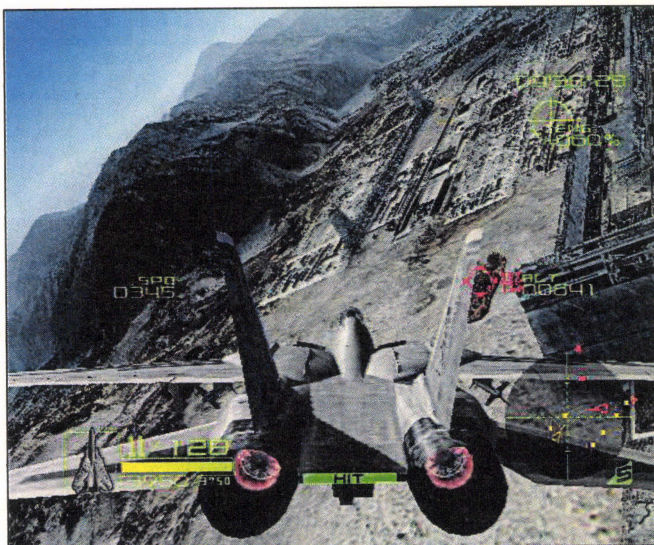
AirForce Delta Storm

Publisher: Konami

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: AirForce Delta Storm is the first air-combat release for Xbox, as it's scheduled for release in the first wave of titles. The game features more than 50 planes, allowing pilots to maneuver the latest high-tech aircraft through various missions. ■



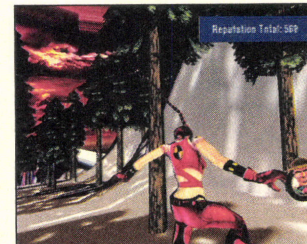
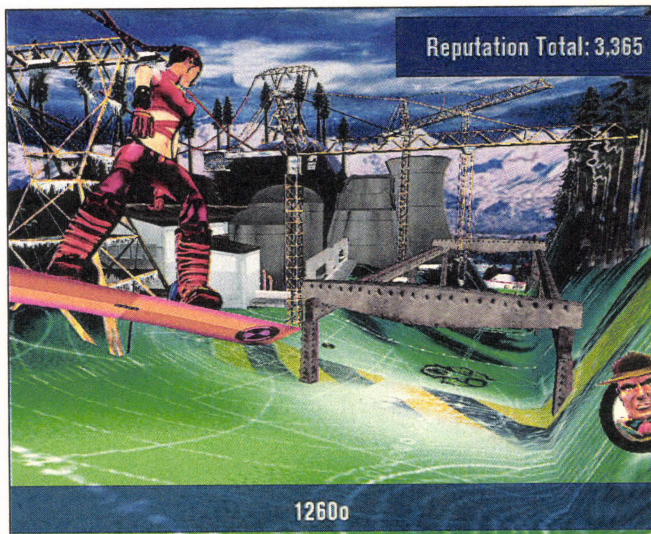
Dark Summit

Publisher: THQ

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: Touted as the only action-adventure snowboarding game with mission-based objectives, Dark Summit is one of the most anticipated Xbox games. Plow through more than 45 perilous landscapes in a quest to earn points and defeat your enemies. ■



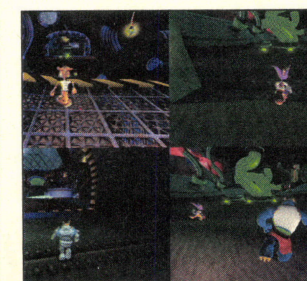
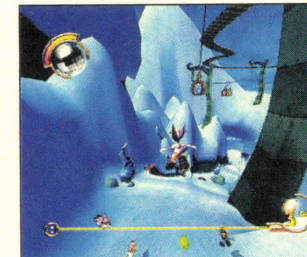
Mad Dash Racing

Publisher: Eidos

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: Race for survival against the evil Hex and his foul cohorts in this high-energy racer. Four-player split-screen allows for battling against friends. Hidden shortcuts and annoying little obstacles such as TNT and rolling boulders always keep the gameplay frantic and fun. ■



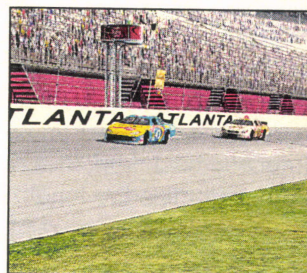
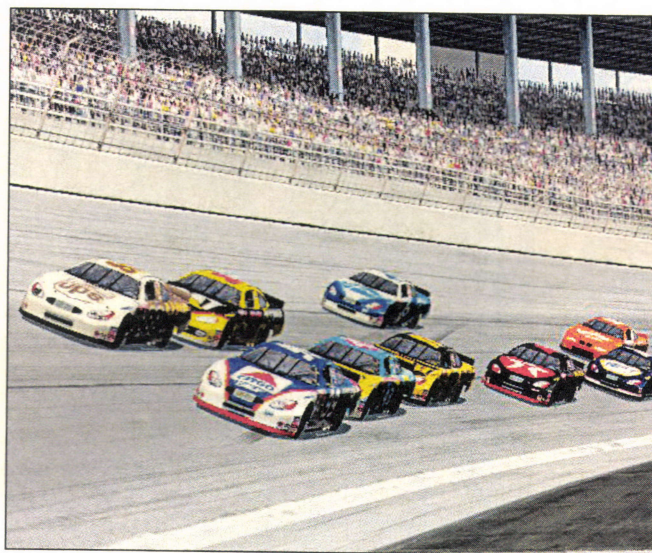
NASCAR Heat

Publisher: Infogrames

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: Capture the thrill of Winston Cup racing as you get behind the wheel of your favorite car and tackle NASCAR's meanest tracks. Features 19 courses, real drivers and four racing modes, including Single Race and Championship Season. ■



Shrek

Publisher: TDK

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: TDK's debut Xbox game is also one of the console's first movie-based titles, as Shrek will hit shelves in conjunction with the release of the DreamWorks film. The game's fantastical adventure world stays fresh with cutting humor and beautiful graphics. ■



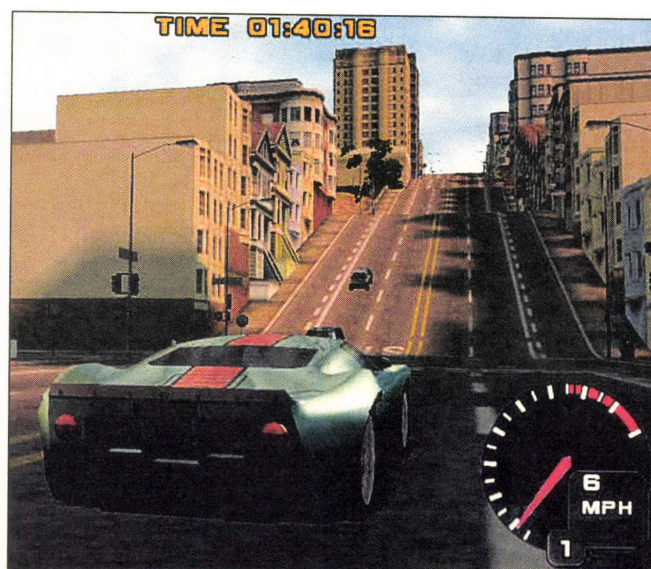
Test Drive

Publisher: Infogrames

System: Xbox

Availability: Fourth Quarter

Description: More than 20 of the hottest licensed sports cars and muscle cars battle for road supremacy in this high-octane racer. Four realistic-looking cities, including London and San Francisco, are ideal settings for these fierce street battles. ■



Coming Soon

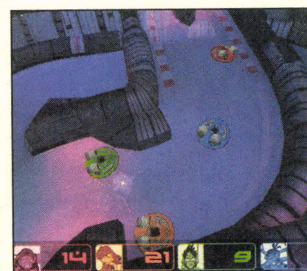
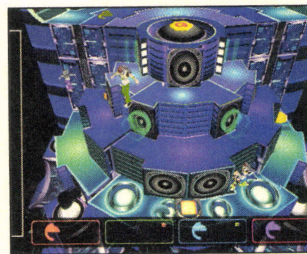
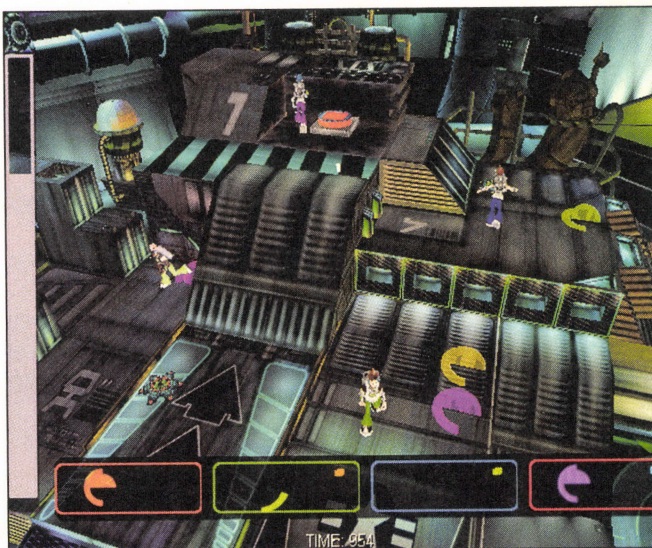
Fuzion Frenzy

Publisher: Microsoft

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: If you liked the multiplayer mahem of Crash Bash for PlayStation, you'll love Fuzion Frenzy. Compete in more than 45 mini-games against an edgy, futuristic backdrop. In a hurry? You can customize the length of the game or play only the mini-games. ■



Amped: Freestyle Snowboarding

Publisher: Microsoft

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: Just what the world needs: another snowboarding game... Amped promises to have wide-open mountain runs instead of claustrophobic "tunnels." The goal is to increase your fame by playing to the cameras. ■



Johnny Drama

Publisher: Sierra

System: Xbox

Availability: TBD

Description: Johnny Drama, an adventure-shooter action title, was custom created for Xbox and is Sierra's first title for the system. Playing as Drama (a movie star turned secret agent), players must thwart Dr. Bumbershoot's evil plan. This role-playing quest occurs in a unique 3-D world. ■



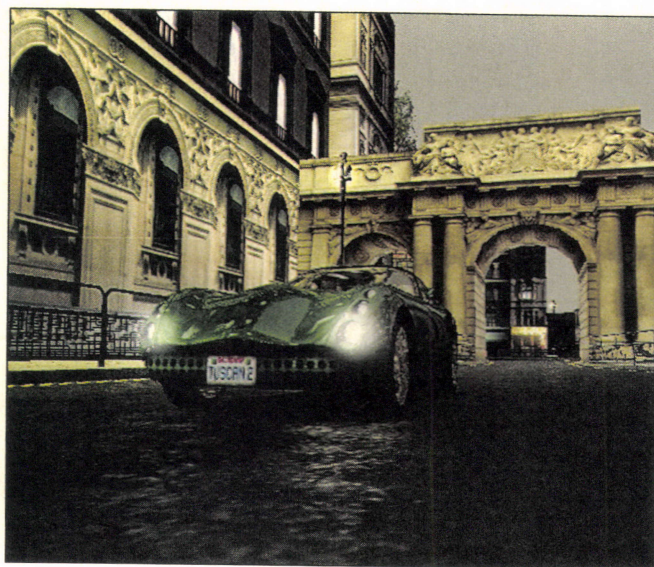
Project Gotham Racing

Publisher: Microsoft

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: The game, ahem, "borrows" Metropolis Street Racer's kudos system, in which players are rewarded for style as well as speed. Look for 20 real-world dream machines, changing time and weather, four real-world cities and four-player split-screen racing in this sharp-looking racer. ■



Azurik: Rise of Perathia

Publisher: Microsoft

System: Xbox

Availability: Fall

Description: In this 3-D adventure game, you play as a young apprentice sworn to protect the sacred elements: fire, water, earth and air. But watch out: Enemies work together, swarm and even ride each other to stop you. ■



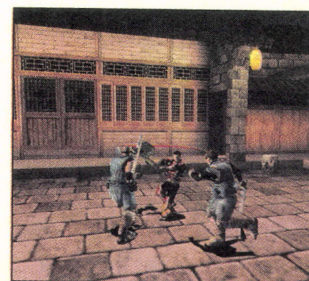
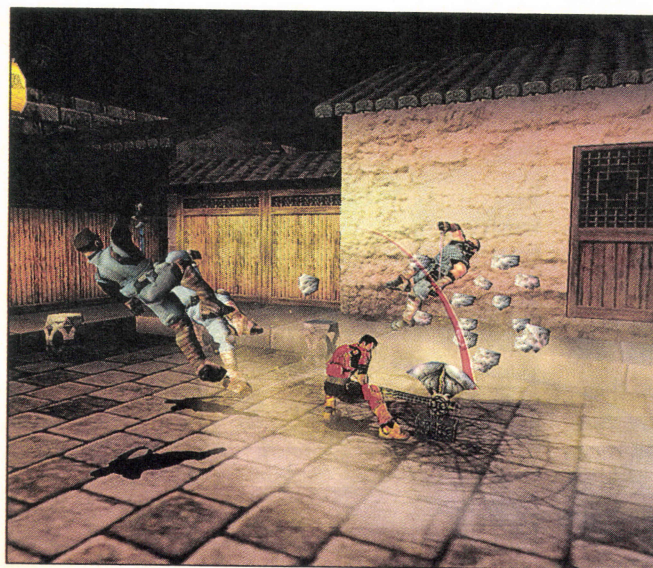
New Legends

Publisher: THQ

System: Xbox

Availability: TBD

Description: New Legends is an action/adventure game that uses the proven Unreal Tournament engine. Wield two weapons at once while performing dramatic martial arts attacks and special moves. You can also find special hidden weapons. ■

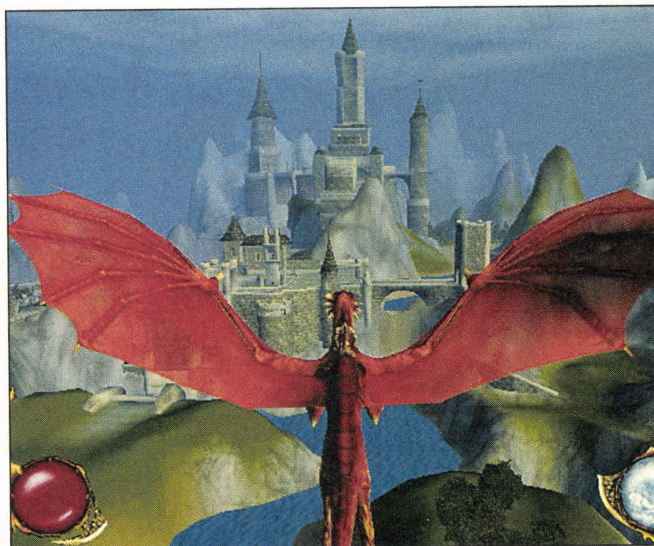


Coming Soon

Drakan II

Publisher: SCEA
System: PlayStation 2
Availability: Fall

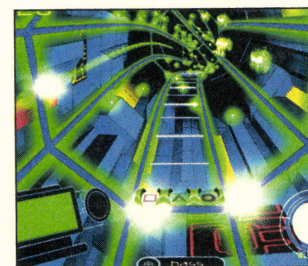
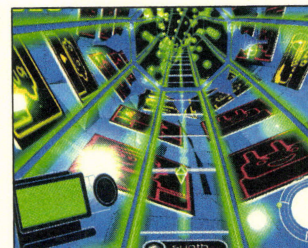
Description: The immortal Spirit Dragons are being held hostage in the ancient world of Drakan. Two beings are charged with saving them: Rynn, a fearless female warrior, and Arohk, a mighty dragon. Trekking through eight foreign environments, the duo engages in countless adventures. ■



Frequency

Publisher: Harmonix
System: PlayStation 2
Availability: November

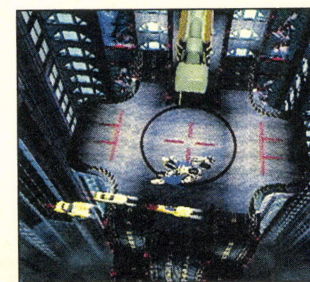
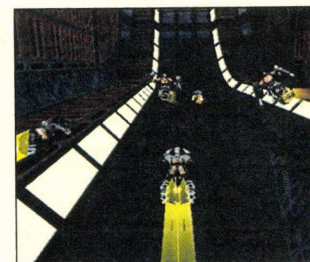
Description: Ever wanted to spice up a song you just heard on the radio? Here's your chance. In Frequency, players can remix songs from top recording artists using multiple combinations of instruments, including guitar, vocals and more. ■



Kinetica

Publisher: SCEA
System: PlayStation 2
Availability: November

Description: The scientifically advanced exoskeletons known as Kinetic Skins morph with humans to produce break-neck speeds in this arcade-style racer. Adaptability is a key to surviving in Kinetica, as more than 12 custom tracks in six futuristic racing environments keep racers on their toes at all times. ■



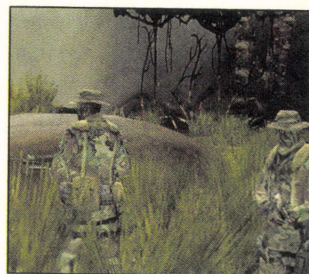
SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs

Publisher: Zipper Interactive

System: PlayStation 2

Availability: November

Description: Guide your SEAL unit through pulse-pounding missions by commanding your players' AI teammates. Commands can be given through menus, real-time text or through an optional microphone headset. Missions are executed in both indoor and outdoor settings. ■



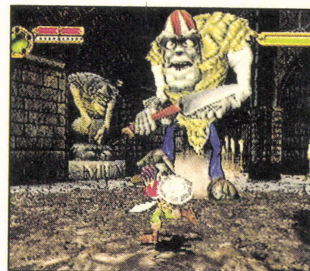
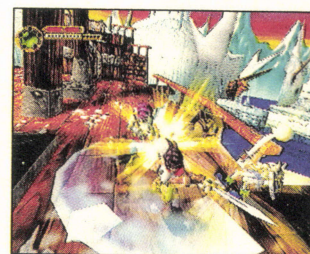
Maximo: Ghosts to Glory

Publisher: Capcom

System: PlayStation 2

Availability: TBD

Description: With customizable characters and more than 40 special abilities, the 3-D action-adventure world of Maximo: Ghosts to Glory shouldn't get old any time soon. But Capcom insists the multiple options won't compromise playability. ■



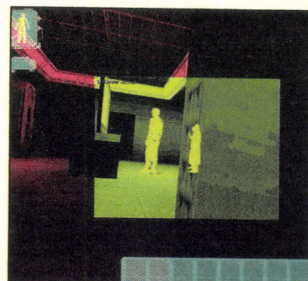
Deus Ex

Publisher: Eidos Interactive

System: PlayStation 2

Availability: Winter

Description: Deus Ex has taken home plenty of hardware as a PC game, including "Game of the Year" awards from several gaming publications. Now the action-adventure thriller is set to take its turn on PS2. Only countless hours in front of your TV screen will tell if it measures up to the PC version. ■

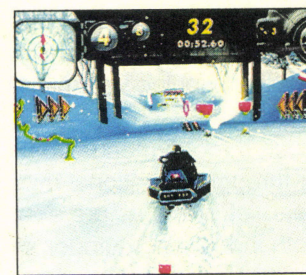
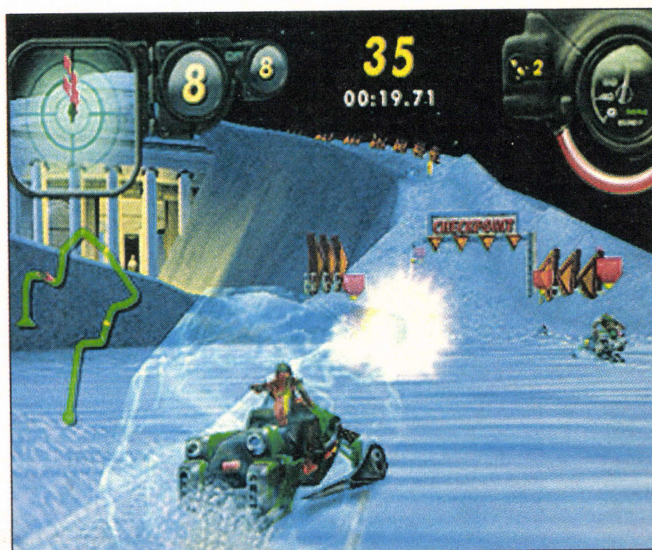


Coming Soon

Arctic Thunder

Publisher: Midway
System: PlayStation 2
Availability: Fall

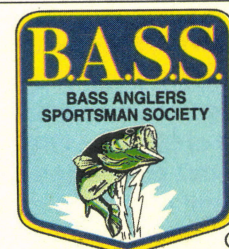
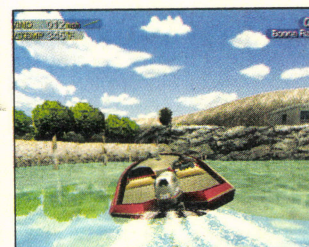
Description: Midway boasts that Arctic Thunder is the first snowmobile racing game to include combat elements. Players are armed with a devastating array of weaponry, including atomic snowballs and proximity missiles. Choose from six racing veterans or unlock other hidden characters. ■



B.A.S.S. Fishing

Publisher: THQ
System: PlayStation 2
Availability: Fall

Description: Created by the makers of Championship Bass, the game is licensed by B.A.S.S. and contains 120 different lures and seven real-world lakes. The game also uses THQ's signature lure cam to capture simultaneous split-screen perspectives. ■



Conflict Zone

Publisher: Ubi Soft
System: PlayStation 2
Availability: Fall

Description: Ubi Soft is readying this innovative real-time strategy game. Like the typical RTS, you manage your resources to eliminate your opponent. However, this one uses 3-D graphics and a new, sophisticated artificial intelligence. ■



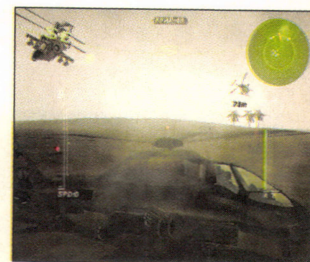
Thunder Strike

Publisher: Eidos Interactive

System: PlayStation 2

Availability: September

Description: This innovative new helicopter sim follows the story of Thunder Hawk, one of the first best-selling Playstation games. Realistic physics, a killer array of weaponsry and hair-raising action highlight this title. ■



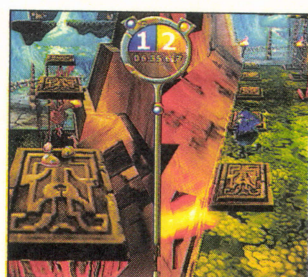
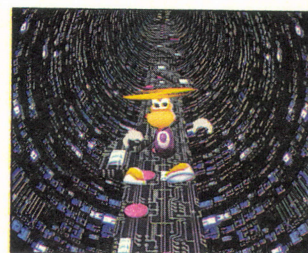
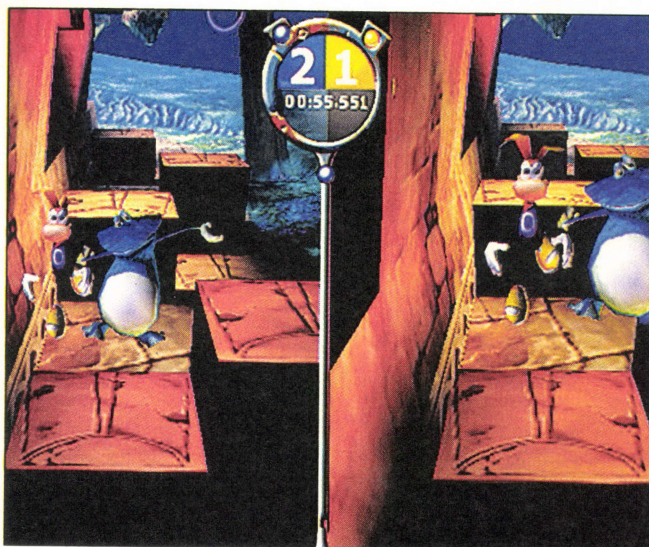
Rayman M

Publisher: UbiSoft

System: PlayStation 2

Availability: Winter

Description: The most famous nonjoint character (he has no arms or legs) makes his fourth appearance in a game. This one diverges from the previous games, however, focusing on multiplayer, Mario Kart-style racing. ■



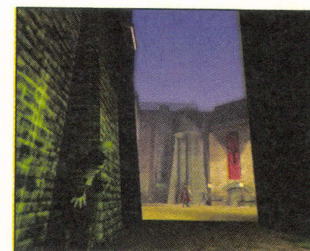
LOK: Blood Omen 2

Publisher: Eidos Interactive

System: PlayStation 2

Availability: Winter

Description: The game that spawned the successful Soul Reaver series returns. While the original Legacy of Kain was a 2-D RPG, Blood Omen 2 is a 3-D action/adventure with an emphasis on hand-to-hand combat, puzzle solving and stealth. ■



PlayStation

Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix

To access the art galleries enter one of the codes below and then go to "Option," "Extra" and finally "Art Gallery."

Art Gallery, Disc 1: At the main menu of disc 1 press Left, Right, Up, Up, Down, Circle.

Art Gallery, Disc 2: At the main menu of disc 2 press Up, Up, R1, R1, R1, Square.

Art Gallery, Disc 3: At the main menu of disc 3 press L1, R2, L1, R2, L1, Square.

Cheat mode: Complete the game on any difficulty setting and start a new game from the same save file. After the starting sequence ends, walk over and use the small control pad on the left wall. Enter any number of the following codes to activate the desired effect.

All Weapons: 11692

Unlimited Ammunition: 61166

Big Head: 10397

Final Fantasy 9

Black Jack: After finishing the game, let the credits finish rolling and then wait a little bit. A blackjack mini-game will soon appear.

Easy Levels: To pull this code off you will need the Auto-Regen skill and a controller with rapid fire.

Find an open field populated with monsters you'll have little trouble defeating, and set the Auto-Regen active. Now hold down either Left+L1 or Right+R1 and set the Circle button to rapid fire and hold it down. Your party will now run around in a perfect circle and will automatically fight any monsters it encounters. If you don't feel like sticking around while the game plays on its own, try using tape, rubbers bands or other household goods to hold the buttons down so you can leave and let the game play on its own. Come back in a few hours and your party should have increased at least a few levels.

Knockout Kings 2001

Black & White Mode: Enter your name as "BAW" in career mode.

Box as a Baby: Enter your name as "BABY" in career mode.

Box as a Bulldog: Enter your name as "BULLDOG" in career mode.

Box as a Clown: Enter your name as "CLOWN" in career mode.

Box as a Cyclops: Enter your name as "EYE" in career mode.

Box as a Gorilla: Enter your name as "GORE" in career mode.

Box as Ashy Knucks: Enter your name as "KNUCKS" in career mode.

Box as Barry Sanders: Enter your name as "SANDERS" in career mode.

Box as Jason Giambi: Enter your name as "GIAMBI" in career mode.

Box as Junior Seau: Enter your name as "SEAU" in career mode.

Box as Owen Nolan: Enter your name as "NOLAN" in career mode.

Box as Schmacko Throb: Enter your name as "THROB" in career mode.

Box as Steve Francis: Enter your name as "FRANCIS" in career mode.

Double Damage: Enter your name as "DOUBLEDAMAGE" in career mode.

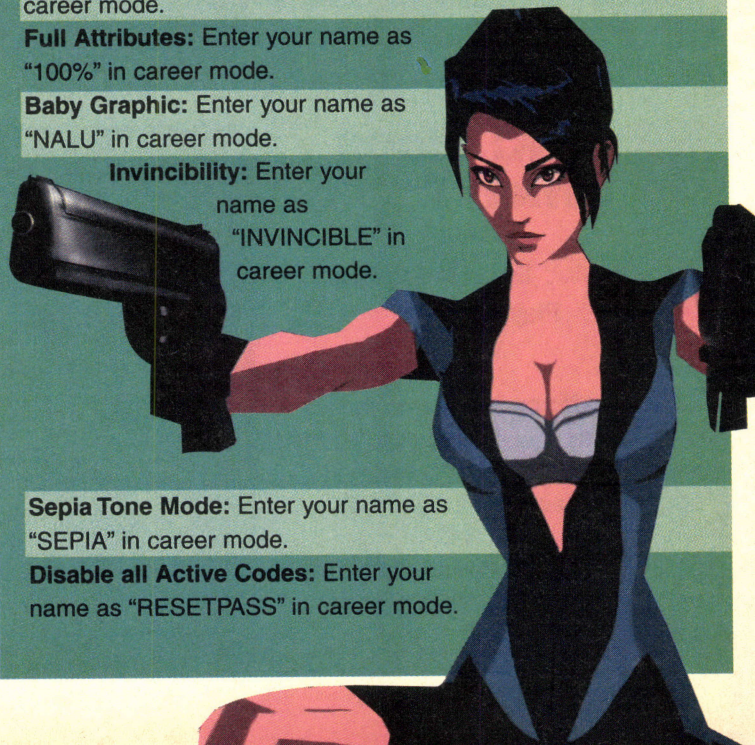
Full Attributes: Enter your name as "100%" in career mode.

Baby Graphic: Enter your name as "NALU" in career mode.

Invincibility: Enter your name as "INVINCIBLE" in career mode.

Sepia Tone Mode: Enter your name as "SEPIA" in career mode.

Disable all Active Codes: Enter your name as "RESETPASS" in career mode.



PlayStation

NBA Hoopz

At the "Tonight's Matchup" screen enter any of the codes below. To enter a code press Turbo times the first number, Shoot times the second, Pass times the third and then the D-pad the direction stated.

ABA Ball: 1-1-1 Right

Away Uniform: 0-2-4 Right

Beach Court: 0-2-3 Left

Big Heads: 3-0-0 Right

Granny Shots: 1-2-1 Left

Home Uniform: 0-1-4 Right

Infinite Turbo: 3-1-2 Up

No Fouls: 2-2-2 Right

No Goaltending: 4-4-4 Left

No Hotspots: 3-0-1 Up

Play as Dr. Atomic: 5-4-4 Left

Show Hotspot: 1-1-0 Down

Show Shot %: 0-1-1 Down

Street Court: 3-2-0 Left

Tiny Heads: 3-3-0 Left

Tiny Players: 5-4-3 Left

PlayStation 2

Knockout Kings 2001

Box as Ashy Knucks: Enter your name as "MECCA" in career mode.

Box as Barry Sanders: Enter your name as "MRBARRY" in career mode.

Box as Bernardo Osuna: Enter your name as "OSUNA" in career mode.

Box as Charles Hatcher: Enter your name as "HATCHER" in career mode.

Box as Chuck Zito: Enter your name as "ZITO" in career mode.

Box as David Bostice: Enter your name as "BOSTICE" in career mode.

Box as David Defiagbon: Enter your name as "DEFIAGBN" in career mode.

Box as David DeMartini: Enter your name as "DEMART" in career mode.

Box as Jason Giambi: Enter your name as "JGIAMBI" in career mode.

Box as Joe Mesi: Enter your name as "BAILEY" in career mode.

Box as John Botti: Enter your name as "JBOTTI" in career mode.

Box as Junior Seau: Enter your name as "JRSEAU" in career mode.

Box as Muhammad Ali: Enter your name as "SBATISTE" in career mode.

Box as Owen Nolan: Enter your name as "OWNOLAN" in career mode.

Box as Ray Austin: Enter your name as "AUSTIN" in career mode.

Box as Steve Francis: Enter your name as "STEVEF" in career mode.

Box as Trevor Nelson: Enter your name as "NELSON" in career mode.

NBA Hoopz

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Away Uniform: 0-2-4 Right

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Big Heads: 3-0-0 Right

Granny Shots: 1-2-1 Left

Home Uniform: 0-1-4 Right

Infinite Turbo : 3-1-2 Up

No Fouls: 2-2-2 Right

No Goaltending: 4-4-4 Left

No Hotspots: 3-0-1 Up

PlayStation 2

NBA Hoopz (cont.)

Play as Dr. Atomic: 5-4-4 Left

Show Hotspot: 1-1-0 Down

Show Shot %: 0-1-1 Down

Street Court: 3-2-0 Left

Tiny Heads: 3-3-0 Left

Tiny Players: 5-4-3 Left

Oni

Level skip: Press Select while playing to bring up the inventory screen, highlight "Help" and press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square, L3, R3, L2, L1.

Invincibility: Press Select while playing to bring up the inventory screen, highlight "Help" and press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square, R3, L3, R3, Circle. Repeat the code to turn off the effect.

Infinite Phase Cloak: Press Select while playing to bring up the inventory screen, highlight "Help" and press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square, L1, R3, L2, L3. Repeat the code to turn off the effect.

Infinite Ammo and Rapid Fire: Press Select while playing to bring up the inventory screen, highlight "Help" and press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square, L2, L2, L1, L3. All weapons will now have unlimited ammo and most will fire rapidly. Repeat the code to turn off the effect.

Fists of Legend: Press Select while playing to bring up the inventory screen, highlight "Help" and press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square, R3, L3, Circle, Square. All weapons will now have unlimited ammo and most will fire rapidly. Repeat the code to turn off the effect.

One-Hit Kills: Press Select while playing to bring up the inventory screen, highlight "Help" and press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square, L3, R3, Circle, Square. Repeat code to turn off the effect.

Character Select: Press Select while playing to bring up the inventory screen, highlight "Help" and press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square, L2(x4). You can now use L2 to cycle through the characters available to you on the current level.

Small Characters: Press Select while playing to bring up the inventory screen, highlight "Help" and press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square, L3, R3, Square, Circle. Repeat the code to turn off the effect.

Big Characters: Press Select while playing to bring up the inventory screen, highlight "Help" and press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square, R3, Square, Circle, L3. Repeat the code to turn off the effect.

Big Head: Press Select while playing to bring up the inventory screen, highlight "Help" and press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square, Start, Square, Circle, Start. Repeat the code to turn off the effect.

Onimusha: Warlords

Panda Costume: Successfully complete the game and save. Now when you start a new game a "Shinnosuke Normal/Special" option will appear. Choose "special" and Samanasuke will be wearing a panda outfit.

Onimusha 2 FMV: Successfully complete the game and save. Now when you start a new game a "Special Report" option will appear. Select this to view a short FMV sneak peek at the sequel.

Oni Spirits Mini-Game: Collect all 20 Flourites and successfully complete the game.

Bishamon Sword, Infinite Ammunition, Magic Regeneration and 99 Soul Absorbers: Successfully complete the Oni Spirits mini-game.

Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing

Race as an AAT Battle Tank: At the main menu, press Circle, Triangle, Square, Circle, Triangle, Square.

Race as Boba Fett: At the main menu, press Square, Circle, Triangle, Circle.

Race as Darth Vader: Earn a gold medal on the Galaxy Circuit with Anakin Skywalker.

Galaxy Circuit: Earn a top-three position on every track.

Mirror Mode: Earn a gold medal on the Galaxy Circuit with any racer.

Summoner

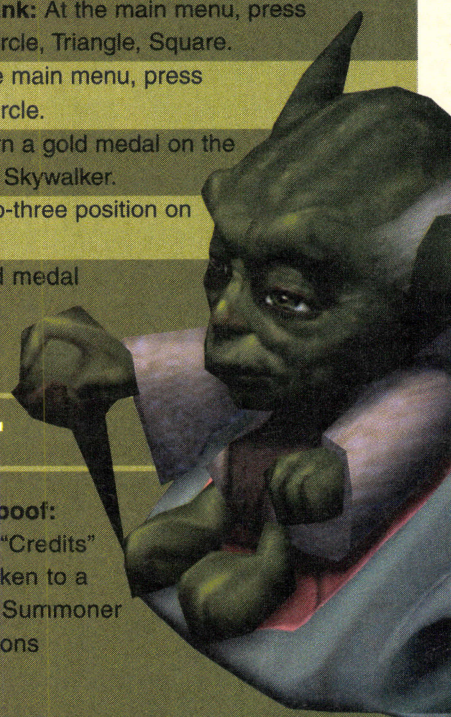
Dungeons & Dragons Spoof:

At the main menu, select "Credits" and then press X to be taken to a hilarious animated skit of Summoner characters playing Dungeons & Dragons.

Zone of Enders

Alternate Ending Music: Successfully complete the game on any difficulty setting, getting "A" ranks on all five rescue missions to hear an alternate ending theme during the credits.

Versus Mode: Successfully complete the game on any difficulty to unlock the versus mode with five frames and most stages. Successfully complete the game on any difficulty setting a second time to unlock the remaining frames and stages.



Dreamcast

Daytona USA

Quick Start: At the start of the race, hold the brake and keep the RPM gauge in the yellow. When the announcer yells "Go!," immediately release the brake and slowly depress the gas. This trick does not work on races that begin with a rolling start. Hold the RPM gauge in the yellow during the countdown. Hold the brake when the countdown reaches "2." Immediately release the brakes and accelerate when "1" disappears and "Go" appears.

Javelin Car: Play the game for 100 hours. Thankfully, your time is saved to the VMU and therefore you can accumulate time over several gaming sessions.

Pywackett Barchetta Car: Complete any single race with all four original cars (Falcon, Grasshopper, Hornet, Lightning).

Pywackett Barchetta Super Car: Complete any single race backwards with the Pywackett Barchetta.

Red Cat Car: Win any Net Battle (online race).

Rule of 9th car: In single-race mode, beat the records on all eight reverse tracks.

Unicorn car: Complete the game in Championship mode.

NBA Hoopz

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Beach Court: 0-2-3 Left

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Infinite Turbo: 3-1-2 Up

No Fouls: 2-2-2 Right

No Goaltending: 4-4-4 Left

No Hotspots: 3-0-1 Up

Play as Dr. Atomic: 5-4-4 Left

Show Hotspot: 1-1-0 Down

Show Shot %: 0-1-1 Down

Street Court: 3-2-0 Left

Tiny Heads: 3-3-0 Left

Tiny Players: 5-4-3 Left

Phantasy Star Online

Hidden Costumes: Start a new character and enter one of the following character names in all CAPS to unlock two

additional colors schemes for each class.

Fomarl: DNEAOHUHEK

Fonewearl: XSYGSSHEOH

Fonewm: ASUEBHEBUI

Hucast: RUUHANGBRT

Humar: KSKAUDONSU

Hunewearl: MOUEOSRHUN

Racaseal: NUDNAFJOOH

Racat: MEIAUGHSYN

Ramar: SOUDEGMKSG

If the name is entered correctly, you will hear a chime, two new outfits will become available and you will be able to rename your character to whatever you want.

Strike A Pose: While in a lobby press [ALT] + [F1]-[F12] to strike a series of different poses.

Sega Smash Pack: Volume One

Altered Beast

Infinite Continues: After losing your last life, hold X and press Start. The game will now continue on the last level you played instead of the first stage.

Options Menu: At the title screen, hold A and press Start.

Level select: Enter the "Options Menu" and select the level you would like to start on. Now return to the title screen and hold X and press Start.

Beast Select: At the title screen, hold X+A+B+Down-Left and press Start.

Sound Test: At the title screen, hold X+B+Up-Right and press Start.

Golden Axe

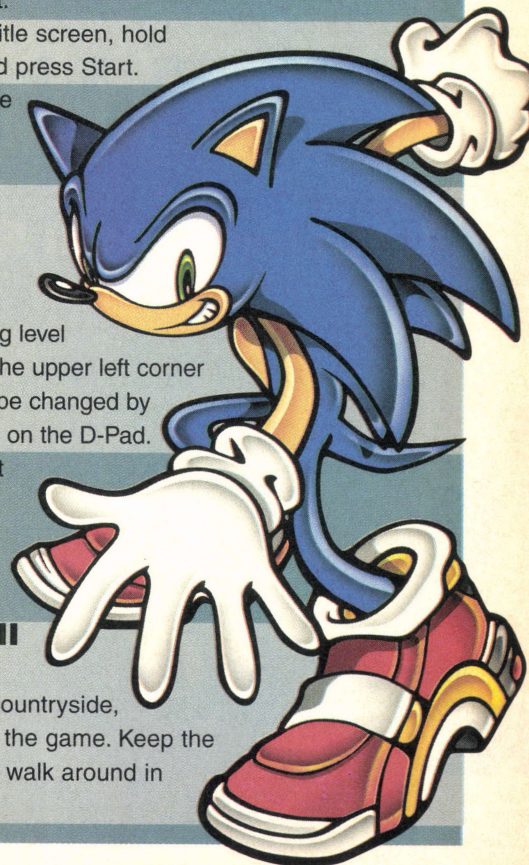
Level Select: Start an arcade game and then hold Down-Left+A and press Start. The starting level number will appear in the upper left corner of the screen and can be changed by pressing Up and Down on the D-Pad.

Nine Continues: Start an arcade game and hold Down-Left+X+B, release, and then press Start.

Phantasy Star II

Slow-motion mode:

While wandering the countryside, hold A+Start to pause the game. Keep the A button depressed to walk around in slow-motion.



Dreamcast

Sega Smash Pack: Volume One (cont.)

Revenge of Shinobi

Infinite Shurikens: Enter the "Options Screen" and set the number of shurikens to "00." Wait about 15 seconds and the "00" will turn to "•."

Shining Force

Dialogue Test: Hold A when the girl starts to say "Good Luck."

Sega Swirl

Easy Points: Start the game and pull off a big combo, pause the game and select to restart the game. The points the combo will be added at the start of your next game.

Sonic the Hedgehog

Level Select: At the title screen, press Up, Down, Left, Right. Now hold X+Start to bring up the level select screen.

Debug Mode: At the title screen, press Up, A, Down, A, Left, A, Right, A, Start. Immediately press and hold X and keep depressed until the game begins.

Streets of Rage 2

More Options: Highlight "Options" and hold A+X on controller two and B on controller one.

Select the Same Fighter (Two-Player): At the title screen, hold Right+Down+A on controller one and Left+X on controller two. While everything is being held on both controllers, press B on controller two.

Vectorman

Collision Detection Dots: Press Start to pause the game and then press X, A, X, B, X, A.

Debug Mode: At the "Options" screen, press X, A, A, X, Down, X, A, A, X.

Free Movement: Press Start to pause the game and then push B, X, Left, Left, X, B, X, A.

Map Coordinates: Press Start to pause the game and then push A, X, Left, Left.

Refill Health: Press Start to pause the game and then push X, A, Right, X, B, X, Down, X, A, Right, X.

Slow-Motion Hits: Press Start to pause the game and then push X, B, Up, Left, X.

Virtua Cop 2

Big Head Mode: Complete the game on any difficulty. Once the game has returned to the "Press Start Button" screen, press X, A, Y, B, B, B, Up(x5) on controller D.

Mirror Mode: Complete the game on any difficulty. Once the game has returned to the "Press Start Button" screen, press L, Left, L, Right, L, Down, L, Up, R, Left, R, Right, R, Down, R, Up on controller D.

Random Mode: Complete the game on any difficulty. Once the game has returned to the "Press Start Button" screen, press B, Left, X, Y, X, Y, B, A, B, A, Right, Left, Right, Left on controller D.

Nintendo 64

Conker's Bad Fur Day

Easy Difficulty: EASY

Very Easy Mode: VERYEASY

Fifty Lives: BOVRILBULLETHOLE

Open All Chapters and Scenes: WELDERSBENCH

Open The Heist Chapter:
CHOCOLATESTARFISH

Open Its War Chapter:
BEELZEBUBSBUM

Open Spooky Chapter:
SPANIELSEARS

Open Uga Buga Chapter:
MONKEYSCHIN

Open Soprano Chapter:
ANCHOVYBAY

Open Bats Tower Chapter:
CLAMPIRATE

Open Barn Boys Chapter: PRINCEALBERT

Play as Cavemen in Multi-Player Games: EATBOX

Play as Conker in Multi-Player Games: WELLYTOP

Play as Gregg the Grim Reaper in Multi-Player Games:
BILLYMILLROUNABOUT

Play as Neo Conker in Multi-Player Games:
EASTEREGGSRUS

Play as Sergeant and Tediz Leader in Multi-Player Games:
RUSTYSHERIFFSBADGE

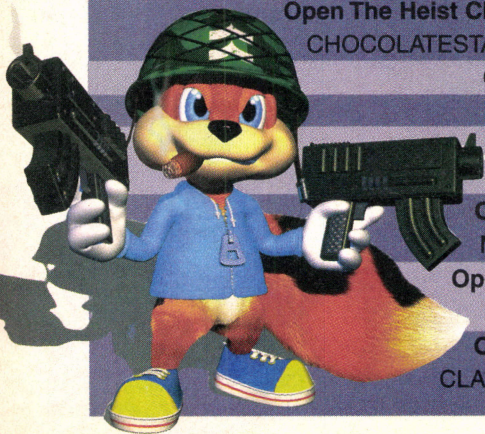
Play as Weasel Henchmen in Multi-Player Games:
CHINDITVICTORY

Play as Zombies and Villagers in Multi-Player Games:
BEEFCURTAINS

Random Matrix-Style Decapitations in Multi Deathmatch:
SPUNKJOCKEY

Use Baseball Bat in Multi-Player Race:
DRACULASTEABAGS

Use Frying Pan in Multi-Player Race: DUTCHOVENS



Nintendo 64

Mario Tennis

Ring Tournaments: Ring Tournaments are tournaments Nintendo set up so players can compare their scores against other players. From the main menu select "Special Games" then "Ring Tournament" and enter one of the codes below code.

When you have finished any of the cups, enter the code given to you after the match at www.mariotennis.com to rank yourself.

Blockbuster Cup: ARM6JQARU

Bowser Cup: N24K8QN2P

Donkey Kong Cup: MM55MQMMJ

Luigi Cup: M1C2YQM1W

Mario Cup: A3W5KQA3C

MarioTennis.com Cup: 48HWOR482

Nintendo Power Cup: J6M9PQJ6U

Peach Cup: OF9XFQOFR

Waluigi Cup: LA98JRLAR

Wario Cup: UOUFMPUOM

Pokémon Puzzle League

Unlock all Puzzles in Puzzle University: At the title screen, hold Z and press A, B, R, A, A, B, R, A.

Unlock Levels 50-99 in Marathon Mode: At the title screen, hold Z and press B, A, L, L or score a minimum of 10,000 points in Marathon Mode.

Unlock all Trainers: Start a two-player vs. game and at the trainer select screen, hold L+R+Z on both controllers.

V-Hard Difficulty: At the "Game Settings" screen, hold Z and press L, L, A, B or complete the game on the Normal difficulty.

S-Hard Difficulty: At the "Game Settings" screen, hold Z and press R, L, A, B or complete the game on the V-Hard difficulty. Note: this will also unlock the V-Hard difficulty.

Mewtwo's Stage: At the trainer select screen hold Z and press B, Up, L, B, A, Start, A, Up, R or complete the game on the V-Hard difficulty. Player one will battle as Ash and player two will battle as Mewtwo.

Game Boy Color

Blade

Ending Sequence: To view the ending sequence, enter "9?!1N?BKT?51G" as your password.

Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX

All Goals and Levels Complete: At the password screen, enter "R6KZBS7L1CTQMH."

The Mummy Returns

Level Passwords: Enter the following passwords starting at the 12:00 position and circling around clockwise.

Level 02: 1PWK47

Level 03: K3J178

Level 04: 3C466P

Level 05: XS0N0C

Level 06: N0N1F1

Level 07: B4S6L7

Level 08: 144W88

Level 09: NMQ5NT

Level 10: TSXZ0H

Level 11: RDV011

End Credits: 64P51T

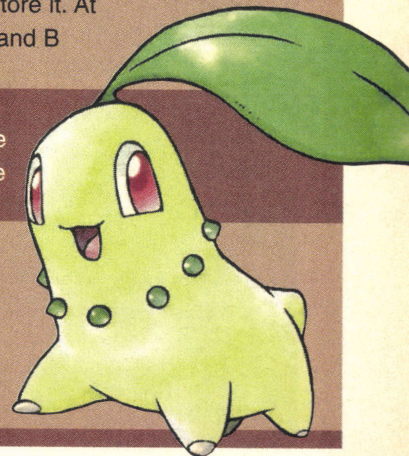
Pokémon Gold

Catch Ho-oh: Defeat the Team Rocket Leader at the Radio Tower in Goldenrod city and receive the Rainbow Wing. Use the Rainbow Wing to climb up the Tin Tower at Ecruteak City to find a level 40 Ho-oh waiting for you at the top. Be careful: You only get one chance to capture Ho-oh.

File Erase: WARNING: This will ERASE your saved game and you WILL NOT be able to restore it. At the title screen, press Up, Select and B at the same time.

Exclusive Gold Pokémon: The following list of Pokémon can only be found in Pokémon Gold and must be traded to Pokémon Silver.

- #56 Mankey
- #57 Primeape
- #58 Growlithe
- #59 Arcanine
- #167 Spinarak
- #168 Ariados

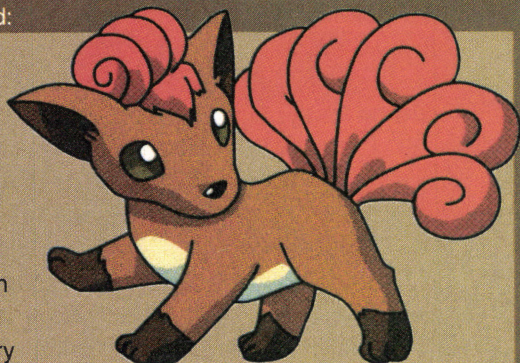


Game Boy Color

- #216 Teddiursa
- #217 Ursaring
- #207 Gligar
- #226 Mantine

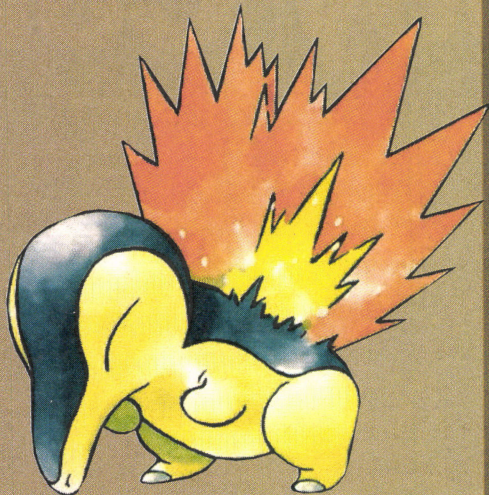
Exclusive Silver Pokémon: The following list of Pokémon can only be found in Pokémon Silver and must be traded to Pokémon Gold:

- #37 Vulpix
- #38 Ninetales
- #52 Meowth
- #53 Persian
- #165 Ledyba
- #166 Ledian
- #231 Phanpy
- #232 Donphan
- #225 Delibird
- #227 Skarmory



Pokémon Not Found in Gold or Silver: The following list of Pokémon can't be found in Pokémon Gold and Silver and must be traded over from Pokémon Blue, Red or Yellow:

- #1 Bulbasaur
- #2 Ivysaur
- #3 Venusaur
- #4 Charmander
- #5 Charmeleon
- #6 Charizard
- #7 Squirtle
- #8 Wartortle
- #9 Bastoise
- #138 Omanyte
- #139 Omastar
- #140 Kabuto
- #141 Kabutops
- #144 Articuno
- #145 Zapdos
- #146 Moltres
- #150 Mewtwo
- #151 Mew



Pokémon Silver

File Erase: WARNING: This will ERASE your saved game and you WILL NOT be able to restore it. At the title screen, press Up, Select and B at the same time.

Catch Ho-oh: After defeating the final travel to Pewter City where an old man will give you the Rainbow Wing. Use the Rainbow Wing to climb up the Tin Tower at Ecruteak City to find a level-70 Ho-oh waiting for you at the top. Be careful, since you only get one chance to capture Ho-oh.

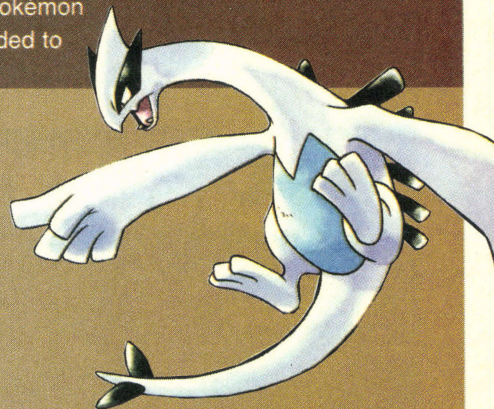
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BANDAI'S
MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM:
JOURNEY
TO JABURO





FINAL FANTASY X

